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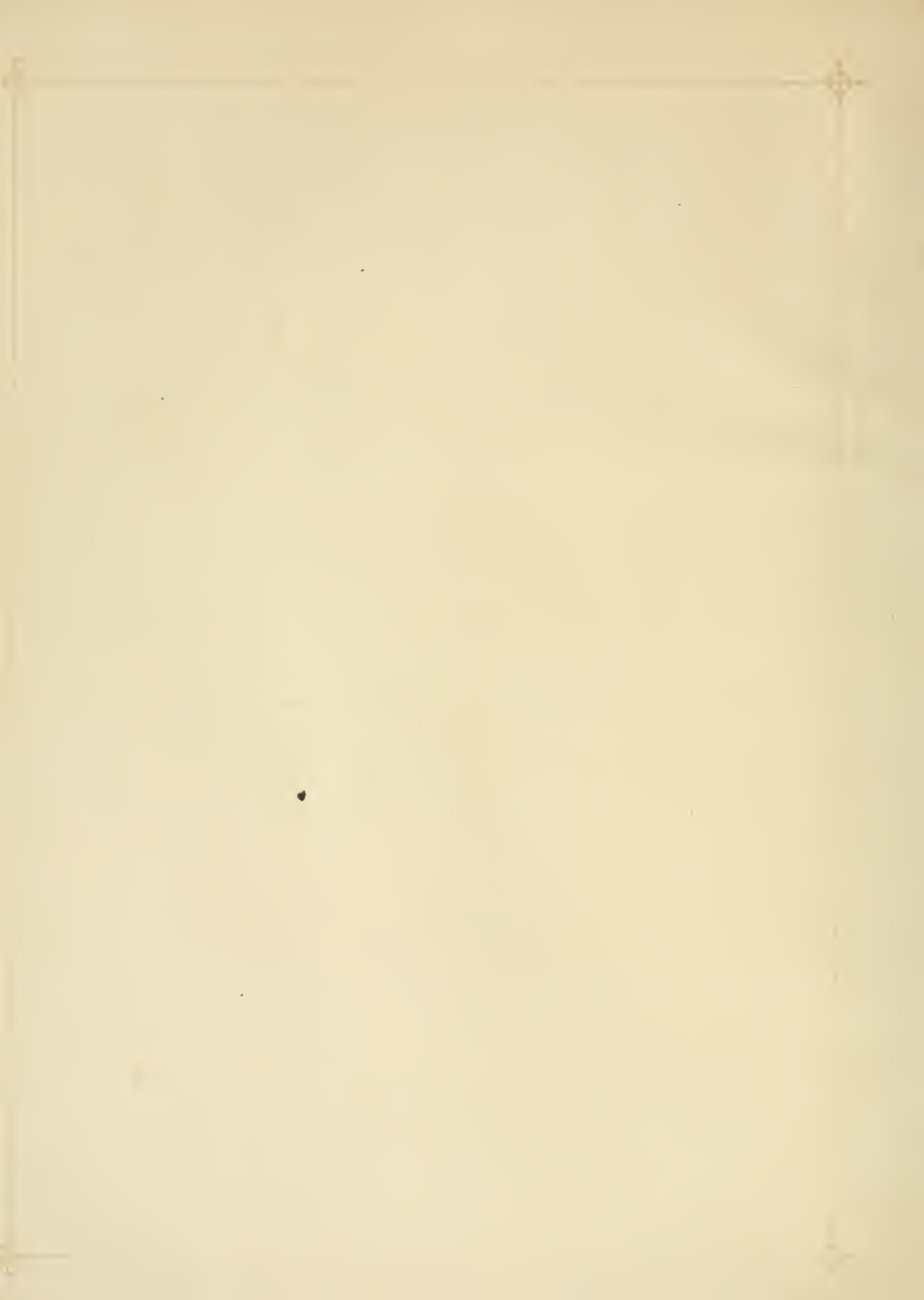
LAYS of the



BELVOIR HUNT



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Hugh Fraser

from

John Hamilton

Melton 1898





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THE HOUSE AT MONTELEONE, TEXAS

LAYS

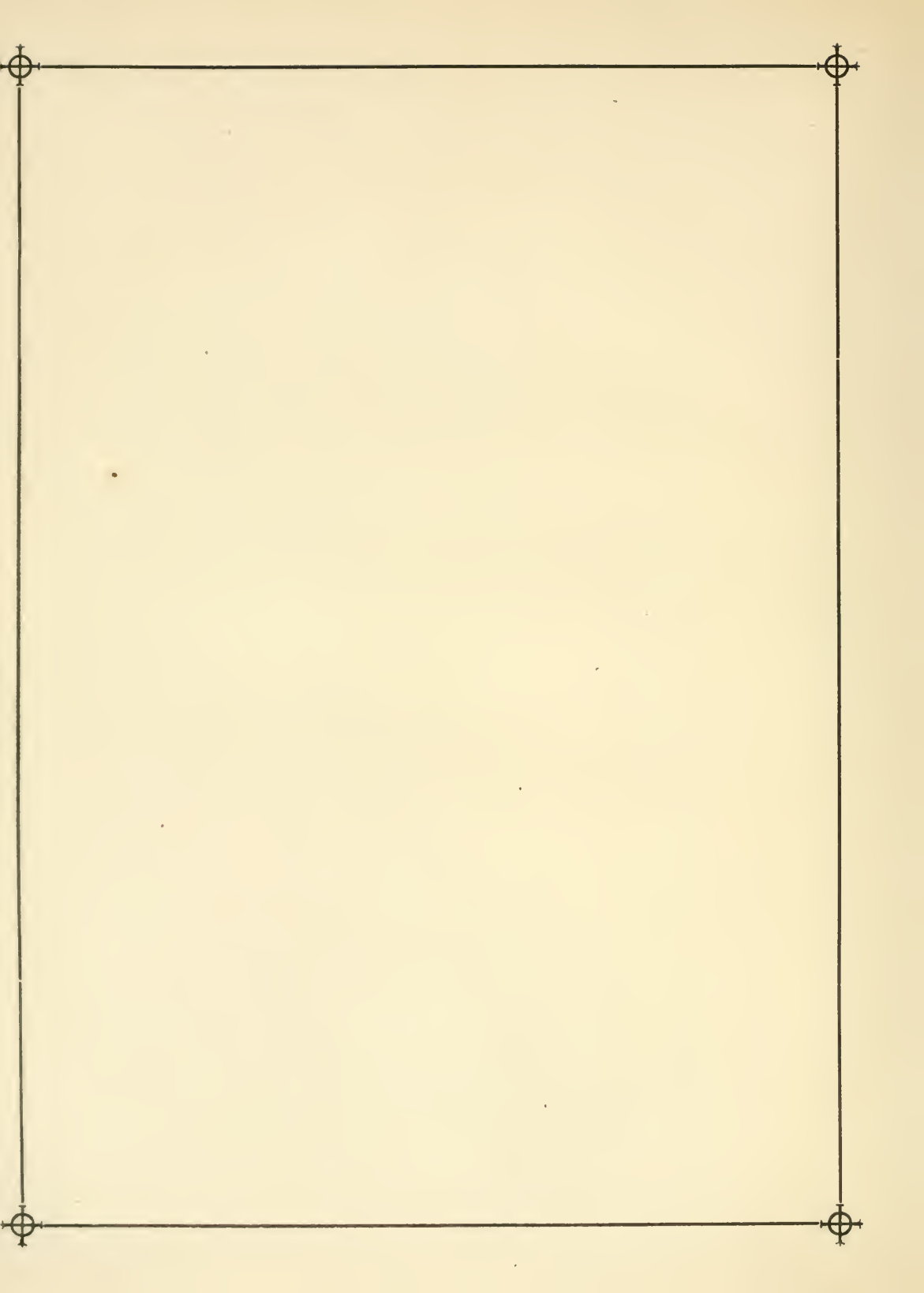
OF THE

BELVOIR HUNT.

SECOND EDITION.

GRANTHAM:
LAWRENCE RIDGE, HIGH STREET.
LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.

1874.

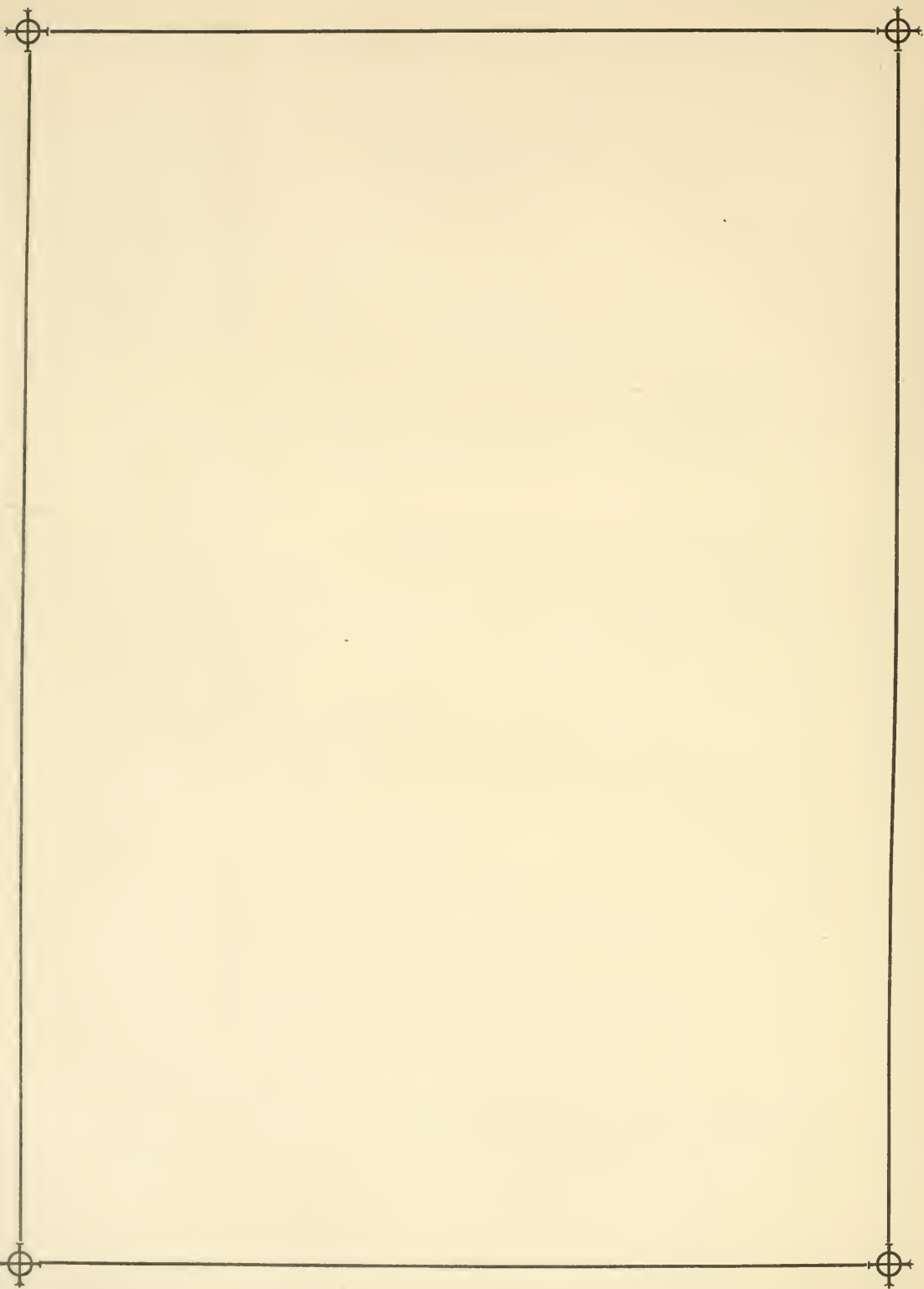


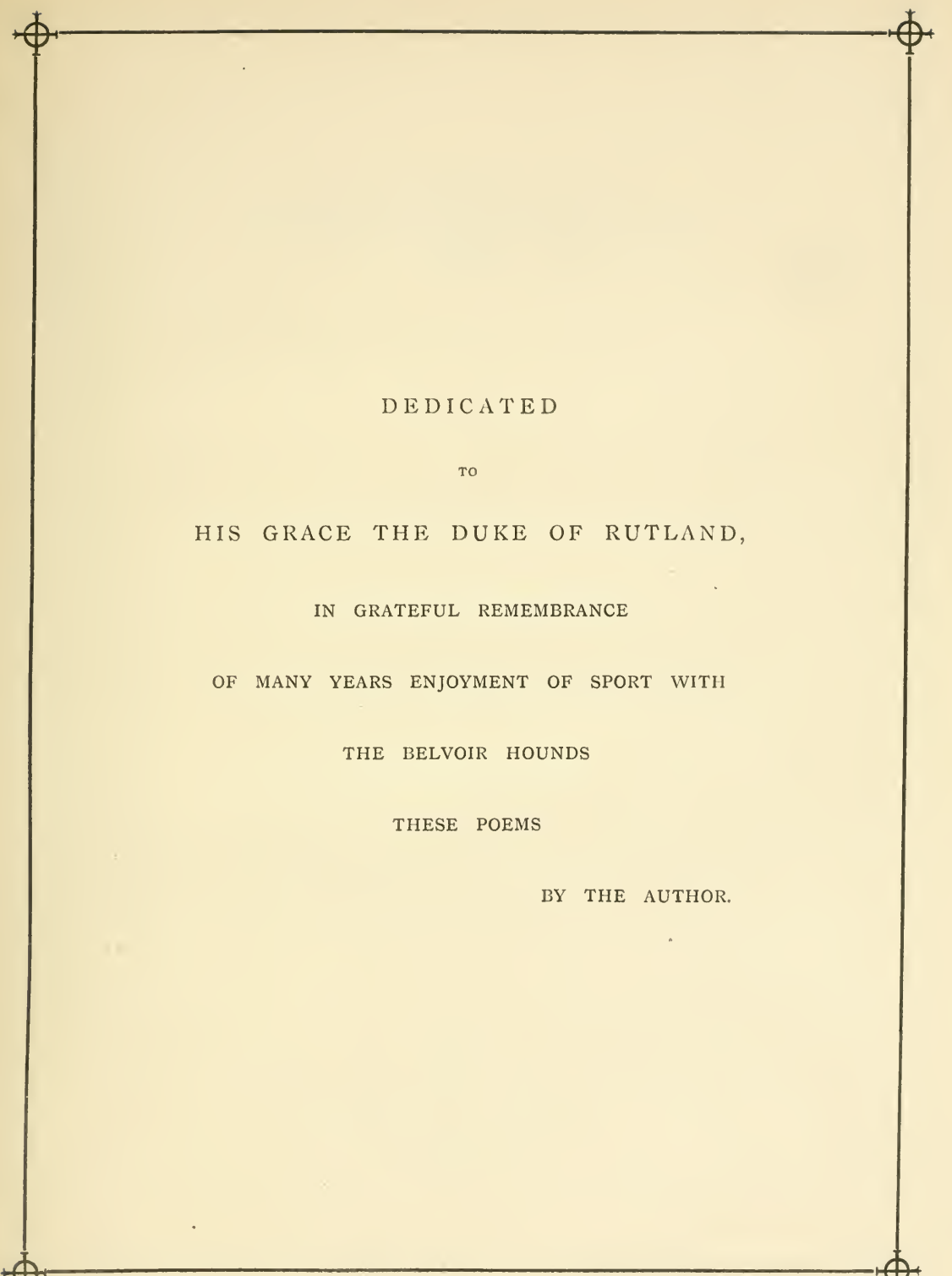
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1874

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DEDICATED

TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF RUTLAND,

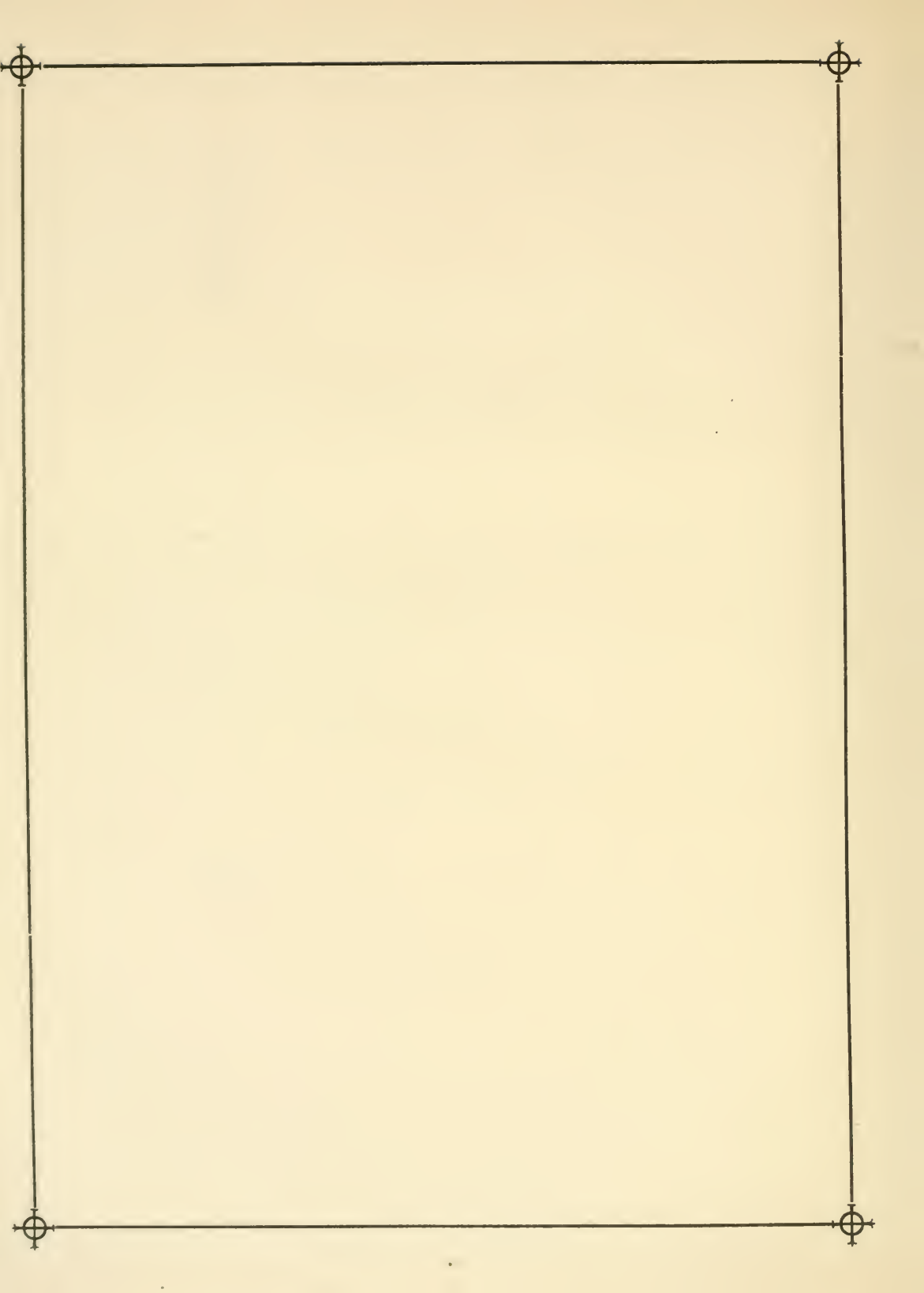
IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE

OF MANY YEARS ENJOYMENT OF SPORT WITH

THE BELVOIR HOUNDS

THESE POEMS

BY THE AUTHOR.





FROM "DARTMOOR DAYS."

If ever mortals could pursue,
A pastime of a venial hue,
Or earthly charms could e'er bestow
A pure enjoyment here below,
The chase alone may fairly claim
Precedence in the stirring game.
The fairest rose, the honey bee
Are not from thorns and venom free,
And bright-eyed faces often dart
An arrow that enslaves the heart.
But where's the man can even say,
That, looking back, he rued the day,
When pastime of a guiltless kind
Engaged his thought, and cheered his mind?
No thorns Diana's roses bring.
The honey comes without the sting:
And many a faithless fair will yield
Her triumphs on this battle field.







YE MERRIE BALLAD OF YE COSTON BROOK.

“ SUB JUDICE LIS EST.”

Hark ! 'tis the note of opening hound,
Our fox his covert scorns ;
Again with Goodall's horn resound
The far famed Sproxton Thorns.

Eager to start are Melton's pride—
(It is no common day)—
Wilton and Gilmour side by side,
And Lloyd upon his grey.

Cottesmore sends forth her trusty knights ;
The choicest from their studs,
And hero of a hundred fights
Cross country, *O'rton Woods*.

Right well in Belvoir can we trust,
Our Duke can lead the way,
And be the pace the best or worst,
We know that he can “ stay.”

There's “ Banks ” who tho' he start the first
Is loath to persevere,
And Houson who can lead the burst,
Or last—at night to cheer.

Keenly the "Woodland Veteran's" eye
Discerns where Reynard goes,
To shake him off 'tis vain to try
Who all the country knows.

Long would it take my humble muse
To tell the varied chaff,
How Melton swells the plough abuse,
How Belvoir "Ploughmen" laugh.

Of Fanes the Cliff-Row sends her band,
Bold riders all are they—
One chiefly does my song demand,
Our hero of to-day.

See you the man on high-bred brown,
With Martingale on rein;
The horse a "chaser of renown,"
The Hero, Cecil Fane.

No thoughts to-day has he of Court,
Of Cheats, of "*Chizzling*" Hall;
His sole ambition is the sport,
To ride in front, or fall.

"Pray, George," cries Wilton, "head the beast
"From facing that deep clay:"
He hears not, heeds not in the least,
But blows his horn—Away!

Away! away! our fox is gone,
Where? we've no time to look,
But helter, skelter, hurry on
Down to the Coston brook.

He's headed—to the left he turns,
He cannot double back;
With ardour keen each rider burns,
The rails and fences crack.

Along the meadows speeds the flight,
Where Coston's waters glide,
While some select the furthest right—
Some on the left decide.

Now to the front begin to creep
The men on mischief bent,
The brook "to look at ere they leap"
Is little their intent.

Foremost amid the charging throng
With fleet and gallant step,
Urged by his master's voice along—
See, 'tis the brown "Dieppe."

He sees the meandering waters gleam—
He snorts, he cocks his ears;
Ah! like the flashing of a dream,
His rider disappears.

A stop—a shot—a pang of pain,
"Dieppe" stands rider free,
A cry of "where is Cecil Fane?
Wherever can he be?"

We see a scarlet "somersault,"
A splash the water stirs,
And gleaming thro' the glittering wet,
A pair of boots and spurs.

We see a dismal dripping frame
Rise from the muddy deep,
It's said an imprecation came
About that cursed leap.

"And you, you brute! how dared you pop
"(Henceforth your corn I grudge,)
"Into this foul and nasty slop,
"Your master and your judge?"

" You, whom I've petted and carest
 " Throughout the longest day,
" And sworn you were the very best
 " Who'd never turn away."

" Me thinks I hear the laughter long,
 " Borne on the envious air,
" And won't ' My Lord ' just pitch it strong
 " Into each listening ear."

" Come here you brute, in sullen haste
 " To Croxton must we hie,
" And should that horrid chase sweep past,
 " Bah ! ' perdu ' must I lie."

Glad sight ! " The Peacock " spreads its tail,
 And screens the dripping man ;
Gladly with chattering teeth and pale
 He to its parlor ran.

He doffs the scarlet of the fight,
 The breeches, garb of woe ;
He sits like " Adam in his might,"
 Naked from top to toe.

But no ! for " Adam in his might,"
 Tho' bare from head to toes,
To wear had not assumed the right
 Of spectacles on nose.

As now no longer cold and wet,
 He sipp'd his hot bohea,
In terms of sorrow and regret
 Soliloquised he.

" How can it be ? Those high-bred lips
 " Do all my hopes confound ;
" Could it be those infernal tips
 " Have me so nearly drowned ?

“ Must I then quit judicial bench
“ And all its roguish cares,
“ To plunge into that oozy stench
“ Whilst every booby stares ?

“ And then to think that all my fame,
“ The experience of my years,
“ Should furnish matter for the game,
“ And jokes of my compeers.

“ Henceforth I'll quit this heartless chase,
“ And Dieppe's life blood quench ;
“ Here shall not be my resting place,
“ I'll die upon my bench.

“ Give me, ye knaves, one other chance,
“ (Oh may the brook be wide,) ,
“ I'll lead you all a merry dance,
“ I'll humble all your pride.

“ ‘ *Ne Vile Fano*,’ be my cry,
“ Tips ! Tips ! against the field,
“ I've skimmed the brook—my lord, good bye,
“ Confess, you now must yield.”

FINALE.

Perchance some future Buckland may
In ages hence delight
To fossils seek, where once did stray
The Coston brooklet bright.

Long turned he finds it from the course
Once leapt by horse and hound,
The streamlet changed from its source
Has varied in its round.

He peers amid its sandy bed,
Amid its pebbles dry ;
He sees a curious form of head,
A forehead broad and high.

He marks the rim around the eyes,
Encrusted in the sludge ;
“ Oho ! this is the head,” he cries,
“ Of a once learned judge.”

“ Henceforth we true the legend deem,
“ Which village gossips tell,
“ How once into a Coston stream,
“ A judge from ‘ Dieppe ’ fell.”



The original "The property of -

- Capt Clower - Norbury - Ashbourne -



LOWESBY HALL.

BY W. D. BROMLEY.

Gilmour leave me here a little, and when John O' Gaunt is drawn,
If you find the raw material, let Jack Morgan blow his horn ;

'Tis the place, and all about it, as of old the magpies call,
Boding evil to the lad, and flying over Lowesby Hall.

Lowesby Hall that in the distance overlooks the grassy plain,
Swamp'd from Twyford to the Coplow by the everlasting rain.

Many a day from yonder spinny, in November moist and chill ;
Have I seen the wily animal steal slowly up the hill.

Many a night I've watched the vapors of my last remaining weed,
When my spurs had ceased to animate my apathetic steed ;

Here in search of sport I've wandered, nourishing a verdant youth ;
With the fairy tales of Gallops, ancient runs devoid of truth.

When I dipped into my prospects far as ever I could get,
And felt the wild delirious joy of running into debt.

In the Spring the pink no longer clothes the sad Meltonian's breast,
In the Spring his stump't up horses are at last allowed a rest.

In the Spring too he must settle for the cursed corn and hay,
In the Spring the dire conviction comes upon him—he must pay.

Then my tradesmen all about my door most obstinately clung ;
And their eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung.

So I said “ My faithful tailor, do a bit of stiff for me ;
Trust me yet ; my Uncle’s shaky, all his coin shall flow to thee.”

O’er his greasy cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I’ve seen the nimble lamplighter turn on the gas at night.

And he said “ I’m proud to serve thee, Sir, as any gent in town ;
If so shaky be thine Uncle thou shalt have the money down.”

Credit seized the glass of time, and dribbled out the golden sand ;
Every day became more valueless my frequent note of hand.

Health revived my hardy Uncle, now alas ! he coughed no more,
And the day of his decease appeared more distant than before ;

Many a morning have I waited, with my hopes upon the rack ;
Vainly waited, for the postman, and a letter sealed with black.

Oh my tailor shallow-hearted ; oh my tailor ; mine no more,
Oh the dreary, dreary Bond Street, oh the Strand’s unhappy shore !

Is it well to use me thus Sir ! having known me to decline,
Any further cash advances with security like mine ?

But it *shall* be ! thou shalt lower to the level of a dun,
Seeking custom with acrostics, like the Moseses and Son.

As the tradesman so the customer, and thou shalt measure clowns ;
They shall pay thee for thy corduroys in ignominious browns.

I would use thee, if my passion might expend its real force,
Little better than my dog, and something worsen than my horse.

What is that which I can turn to ? can a gentleman descend
To dig the gold which nature had intended him to spend ?

Every ship is filled with footmen, and Australia overflows
With the Piccadilly porters and the butlers whom one knows.

I had been content to perish on the sandy Sussex shore,
Where Militia-men are marshall'd and the Minie rifles roar.

But the gentle voice of Cobden drowns the fierce invaders drum*
And the Frenchmen do but bluster, and Napoleon funks to come.

Can I but regain my credit ? Can I spend spent cash again ?
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wonderful champagne !

Make me feel the wild pulsation I have often felt before,
When my horse went on before me, and my hack was at the door.

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming sport would yield,
And rejoicing in the cropper that I got the second field.

And at night along the highway in November dark and chill,
Saw the lights of Melton shining from the top of Burton Hill.

Then my spirit rushed before me, and I felt the " thirty four "
Percolating through my system, noble vintage ! now no more.

Brother sportsmen and protectionists rejecting aught that's new,
Oh ! the future that's impending, is a queerish one for you ;

For I look'd into its pages and I read the book of fate ;
And saw Fox Hunting abolished by an order of the State.

Saw the Heavens filled with guano, and the clouds at Man's command,
Raining down unsavory liquids for the benefit of land.

* Written about 1853.

Saw the airy Navies earthward bear the planetary swell,
And the long projected railway made from Hanover to H——l.

Saw the Landlords yield their acres after centuries of wrongs
To the cotton Lords, to whom, its proved, all property belongs.

Queen, Religion, State abandoned, and all flags of party furred
In the government of Cobden and the dotage of the world.

Then shall exiled common sense espouse some other planet's cause,
And the rogues shall thrive in "Tellus," bonnetting the slumbering laws.

Hark! my merry comrades call me, and Jack Morgan blows his horn,
I to whom their foolish pastime is an object of my scorn.

Can a sight be more disgusting, more absurd a paradox,
Than two hundred people riding at a miserable fox?

Will his capture on the morrow, any satisfaction bring?
I am sham'd thro' all my nature to have done so flat a thing.

Weakness, to be wroth with weakness, I'm an idiot for my pains,
Nature made for every sportsman an inferior set of brains.

Here at least I'll stay no longer, let me seek for some abode,
Deep in some provincial country far from rail or turnpike road;

There to break all links of habit, and to find a secret charm
In the mysteries of manuring and the produce of a farm.

To deplore the fall of barley, to admire the rise of peas,
Over flagons of October, giant mounds of bread and cheese;

Never company to dinner, never visitors from town,
Just the Parson and the Doctor, (Mr. Smith and Mr. Brown).

Droops the heavy conversation to an after-dinner snort,
And articulation dwindles with the second flask of port;

There methinks would be enjoyment more than at the festive board
At the hunger-mocking, kickshaw-covered table of a Lord.

There my heart shall beat no longer with my passion's foolish throbs,
I will wed some vulgar woman, she shall rear my race of snobs ;

Double-jointed, mutton-fisted, they shall run, for they shan't ride,
Hunting with the York and Ainsty, or the Harriers of Brookside.

Fool, again the dream, the fancy ! but I *know* my words are stuff,
For I count the swell provincial lower than the Melton Muff.

I to hunt with fustian jackets ! my remaining years to pass ;
With the refuse of Protection, in a land devoid of grass.

Tied to one perpetual woman, what to me were soil or clime ?
I who never could endure the same for ten days at a time.

I who held it better to pursue the patriarchal plan
Than tamely to submit to a monopoly of man ?

Not in vain the distance beckons—what's that skirting the hill side ?
'Tis THE FOX ! I'll bet a hundred—forward ! forward ! let us ride.

I'm before them and they curse me, but no matter, go along ;
Better fifty yards before the hounds than ten behind the throng.

Oh I hear you ! you may holloa ! but my spirit knows no bounds ;
Curse the scent and hang the huntsman, rot the master, d——n the hounds.

Oh I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set,
You set of tailors ! I can ride across the country yet !

Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! was that an oxe ? what ? old Rambler ? is he dead ?
What of that ? Pick up the pieces ; he was mortal ; go ahead !

They've lost the scent—I did it ! Oh ! of course ; I always do !
Here's the Master black as thunder, I'll evaporate, adieu !

Plough the grass ; erect wire fences ; shoot the foxes ; freeze or snow ;
I can catch the train at Leicester ; so to Euston Square I go.



“ SEMPER HONOS NOMENG TUUM, LAUDESQUE MANEBUNT.”

BANKS' SOLILOQUY.

Fame, lasting fame, shall be my meed :
With honors have I won the trick.
For twenty minutes I held the lead,
And beat her *Ladyship on Dick*.

At Cream a gallant fox we found—
No doubt was there about the pace :
At Rearsley when he ran to ground,
Full five miles straight had been the race.

Who now can say of me in scorn ?
“ Banks in the front can never stick.”
Who'll say I cannot beat the Quorn ;
Aye, and the Belvoir fast ones lick.

Or who will say, 'Tis *all my eye*—
Tho' black my eye as any sloe—
For thrusting coves who *Forwards* cry,
Regard but little cut or blow.

Mount me but on my thoroughbred—
I'll show you how I earn my fame :
The black can always beat the red,
And score the honors of the game.

Was I not reared on classic ground,
With Sutton in both shires tried ?
For many a year the country round
With all the crack ones could I ride.

What if the hounds I sometimes prest,
Let envious scarlets have their say.
" My wearied limbs I faintly rest,
And think I've done a feat to-day."

You Suttons—Harry, Frank, and Dick,
No longer at your uncle laugh ;
For of the basket he's the pick,
And you—you're nothing else but chaff.

In vain the bullfinch rears its head ;
In vain the postern rails look new :
When mounted on my thoroughbred,
My boys, I'll give you lots to do.

Aye ! Stamford, you may lose a shoe :
Hold ! Melton blades ! you'll soon have need,
I'll tell you plainly what to do—
Pull back and see me keep the lead.

Let Gaskill thunder down the road,
To-day at least he gets no nick ;
Let Gardner swear, I'm all abroad,
And cannot long my fences pick.

What did I see ? an eager crowd
O'er treacherous fields of holding clay,
Come toiling on and blowing loud,
Anxious to get the shortest way.

And when at last was gained the grass,
And cleared so well that stake and bind ;
I looked again, and saw the farce
Played out by numbers far behind.

Dick Lloyd and Gilmour near I viewed ;
His Grace of Belvoir struggling nigh.
My steed I shook, his pace renewed ;
And left them all without a sigh.

I Tredwell left, and Cheney neat—
Lord Grey on horse no longer pulling ;
And Charlie Leslie well nigh beat ;
And raking, spurting, little Bullen.

How on the run could I descant !
On Leicestershire a sermon give.
How charming 'tis the swells to plant ;
A theme to sing of while I live.

Of lengthy runs, let slow ones prate
Of Foxes killed by rising moon—
Be mine the short and rapid rate ;
The burst that takes me home at noon.

No longer runs will I bewail—
On this alone shall rest my fame—
Dirt cheap I hold the Belvoir Vale,
This only is crème de la crème.

Like Macedonia's hero, I,
What mortal man can do, have done ;
Like him, with real regret I sigh,
No greater conquests can be won.

My vale, my native vale, I own,
No longer charms for me retains ;
My thoroughbred, fastidious grown,
A run from Croxton Park disdains.

The Rufford ! bah ! can I, the pride
Of all the shires, my talents waste ;
To Percy's tow-rows over-ride,
And thro' his deep morasses haste.

Only the Coplow, Cream, and Crick
For me—all others I resign—
There let me wield my hunting stick ;
There let my azure breeches shine.

'Tis past ! 'tis o'er ! just like a dream,
In future days my sons shall hear,
How from the favorite gorse of Cream
Their father did the honors bear.

And whilst I tell them all about
The style in which I made the play ;
Shall Shelton's merry bells ring out,
“ Banks was the hero of the day.”





THE SCALFORD RUN,

JANUARY 4TH, 1862.

[FROM A YOUNG FARMER'S LETTER TO HIS FRIEND.]

My lad, have you heard of the run t'other day
We had with the Belvoir when you were away?
From Scalford our Fox, before ever a hound
Had entered the covert, went off with a bound.

We raced him by Goadby, and, oh! such a lark—
How we rattled along nearly up to "The Park,"
But turning by Stonesby, to Coston he took
Us along at a terrible pace to the Brook.

Then over the meadows by Garthorpe he flew,
To live with the hounds took us all that we knew
Till done to a turn, at the end of an hour,
We reckoned Bold Reynard we had in our power.

But a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,
From the Spinney a fresh one went off with a rush,
And great was the grief and the tailing of horse,
Ere, at Barrow, he gave us the slip near the gorse.

But few of the riders who started so brave,
Were able at last their credit to save ;
And none could be there but the straightgoing men,
So fast was the pace that I counted but ten.

To those who rode thro' the whole run I can swear,
The Duke and his huntsman were certainly there.
I can tell you, my Lad, too, that I did not lag,
I got to the end, but I finished my nag.





THE MIGRATION OF SPRING CAPTAINS INTO LEICESTERSHIRE,

MARCH, 1851,

BY GEORGE STANLEY.

In merry March, when east winds blow, and suns are hot and glaring,
And everybody's nose is cold, and visage flushed and staring,
Spring Captains who, in provinces, have hunted at their ease,
To Melton or to Leicester Town, drop down by twos or threes,
On horses, long, lean, lank, and screw'd, with martingale and snaffle on,
Which not a man on earth would buy, and very few would raffle on.

They come from Chelt'nam's healthy springs, from Leamington's hotels,
From garrison and watering place, from York and Tonbridge Wells ;
From where old Thames flows proudly by Victoria's stately bowers,
Or Severn rolls her mournful wave by Berkeley's feudal towers ;
From where Brightlemstone by the sea extends her long parade,
From London's crystal palace, and the Burlington arcade.

They come from Wiltshire's breezy down's, from Dorset's grassy vales,
From wolds, whence Beaufort's Duke looks forth o'er his own hills of Wales ;
From combes and valleys clustering fair round Devon's steep hill side,
From where the Trent thro' many a shire, conducts his silver tide ;
From heaths and pastures scattered wide over our pleasant land,
From forests not as yet profaned by Seymour's ruthless hand.

E'en Scotland sends her gallant sons, and at a pinch none harder,
And Erin's exports, full of fun and military ardor—
With horses which would race all ours and beat them in a jiffy too,
But something always interferes, because there is an "if" or two ;
If fences were but all stone walls, and were not high but wide ones,
For at ditches they are novices, and at a brook but shy ones.

Then how these gallant heroes ride, the clamour and confusion,
The fuss they make—the rush they make—oh dear ! how they amuse one.
How they press on each others backs, and crowd the gaps and gateways,
And ride in circles round the field and any way but straight ways ;
And how they let their horses loose, and call to folks to catch 'em,
Their own legs being stiff, because horse soldiers never stretch 'em.

And then the falls they get and give, the way they balk and press one,
And cross one at one's fences, and in other ways distress one.
How glad they'll be and so shall we, their hunting tour being over,
When April ends their miseries and lays them up in clover ;
And how they'll bet at Croxton Park, and if their luck wont pull them through,
They'll sell " Old Pat " and " Limerick Lass," and so contrive to pay their due.

Then o'er the strong mess claret, or frothy inn champagne,
When they get to country quarters, they'll sit and talk amain ;
How charging at Lord Wilton's side they got of pace a notion,
And where Lord Granby led the way, they seconded the motion ;
How Forester admired, and Gilmour did not scout 'em,
And how their judgment helped the hounds, which could not hunt without them.

They will not mention where the brook runs by the covert's side,
How " one of theirs " had in the mud, his scarlet jacket dyed.
They will not say how Whichcote's gray, when once he had made sail on him,
O'er hill and valley made such way they could not see the tail of him ;
How one was by the stile deposed, and how the rail had floor'd one,
Both taken coolly in their stride, by Newport and by Gordon.

And now farewell ! to all brave youths, until another season,
To spin a longer rhyme than this would be quite out of reason.
Mind ! when you come again next year, you come prepared for going,
Come one, come all, Goodall will give your best of steeds a blowing ;
The Belvoir hounds will faster run, the fences will grow larger,
And sport will satisfy your first as well as second charger.





THE FIRST OF MAY, 1859.

Lines suggested by hearing the Knipton passing knell, whilst riding on the Devon Hill on that day.

Here let me rest awhile, my steed,
Awhile review the past ;
And thoughts recall, which in our need
We find too seldom last.

To-day again a lesson's taught
Alike to grave and gay,
That earthly hopes are things of nought ;
It is not always May.

How soft the air ! How shines around,
Nature in best array ;
The scene with opening beauties crown'd,
For 'tis the First of May.

The First of May !—a name which brings
A freshness and a joy ;
Recalling dreamy shades of things
Untrammelled by alloy.

Upon the neck I drop the rein.
Blythe is this First of May !
Alas ! how bitter is the pain,
That dims this genial day.

Listen ! from Knipton's ivied fane,
Low issuing thro' the dell,
With measured toll again—again
Sounds the sad passing bell.

And does one ask the reason why ?
A kindred spirit's fled !
Tho' 'tis the lot of all to die,
'Tis hard to think him dead.

Dead ! and on this fair first of May :
How sad does it appear
To us, who hoped for many a day,
To listen to his cheer.

Before me rise fair Belvoir's towers—
Beneath me spreads the vale,
Now glistening bright with April showers,
And May's refreshing gale.

On such a morn from worldly strife
He's gone—beloved by all—
As tho' a good and cheery life
Merits such funeral pall.

He's gone ! whilst birds a requiem sang,
And nature's face was gay ;
Followed by many a heartfelt pang,
In life's meridian day.

How often in November morn,
From out those portals grey,
We've seen the hounds, his ringing horn
With lashing sterns obey.

His cheer too—as with eager strife
They joyful went their way.
'Twere worth ten years of quiet life,
One glance at their array.

Little we dreamt that April eve
(Warm as an eve in June),
'Twas doomed that spirit bold should leave
Its tenement so soon.

As dashing Barkston glades along,
His spirit knew no bounds—
We heard him keenly cheer along,
Last time ! his favorite hounds.

And whilst we sighed the season past,
The last eve drawing nigh,
And lingering on to make it last,
Could hardly say—Good Bye.

Did hope not tell a flattering tale ?
That we might meet again ;
And o'er our well-known Belvoir vale,
Fresh laurels strive to gain.

And tho' awhile to rest be laid
The Hunter, Horn, and Hound,
How little were we then afraid
Of cruel fates rebound.

Could we his by-gone pages read—
His feats by flood and field ;
The varied narrative indeed
An Iliad might yield.

And many a pleasant day that's past ;
And many a name forgot ;
In memory's page might chance to last,
A bright memorial spot.

Linked with the past is Goodall's day,
Long will survive his name ;
His earnest heart and spirit gay,
Live in the lists of fame.

For who of any doubt had need,
That did his features scan,
That he was born to take a lead,
Nature's true Gentleman.

NOTE.—On the First of May, 1859, died WILLIAM GOODALL, for 17 years Huntsman to the DUKE OF RUTLAND. He died in the prime of life, universally regretted.





A LAY OF BULBY HALL, 1859.

THE MIDNIGHT FORAY.

The closing light of winter's day,
Had passed from Bulby woods away ;
The moon rejoicing in her might,
Rode in the Heavens, Queen of Night.

'Twas silence all, save where the brook
Its murmuring course in circles took ;
So calm the air, you well might deem
All nature wrapt in solemn dream.

Outlined against the starry sky
Bulby rose, steeped in mystery ;
Tho' flickering rays from casements shed,
Proclaimed the inmates not in bed.

Aye ! wherefore not ? The midnight oil
Perhaps they waste in studious toil ;
Perhaps immersed in classic lore,
O'er ponderous volumes, deep they pore.

Divines ? or Dilettante they ?
Or wearied Warriors ? Who can say ?
Or Politicians arguing ? Hist !
They deeply play the game of whist.

Enlivened by the racy joke ;
Enveloped in tobacco smoke ;
Engrossed in cards and honors won,
They never heard a midnight gun.

Yes ! 'twas a midnight gun. By some
'Twas said the dread Napoleon's come,
At Boston landed—without doubt,
Soon will be heard his battle shout.

Perchance e'en now his Cent Gardes tall,
Surround the Moat of Boothby Hall ;
And Litchford and his terrier dog,
To France a prisoner off must jog.

Where now's a leader ? Where the man
To be the foremost in the van ?
" The Tartar " * comes in hour of need,
And " Charity " * with breathless speed.

Up, Colonel, up ! To arms ! to arms !
Heard you not far and near, alarms ?
Forsake your weeds, your whist, and wine,
Come quick and capture poachers nine.

Nine poachers bold have crossed the brook,
For Bulby wood their way they took ;
Nine poachers bold with arms in hand,
On pheasants bent, will make a stand.

My Tartar true, I'll stand by thee,
But, Tartar true, you stand by me ;
Summon my trusty servants all,
To help the Squire of Bulby Hall.

Haste ! Varlets ! bid my groom prepare
My dog-cart and the roaring mare ;
Come one ! come all ! this house shall fly
From its broad base as soon as I.

* The Keepers' names.

Where is my boy in buttons? Where?
Bid him of danger take his share.
Fly! Butler, helping Grooms, and zounds!
The man who tills my garden grounds.

My trusty housekeeper may weep,
And swear she can't a vigil keep,
Be hers no questions more to ask,
But fill, fill high my sherry flask.

Now, Comrades all, we take the road,
Tartar and I the dog-cart load;
You, Uncle Harvey,* Perkins* find,
And do not leave the guns behind.

Think you, my Tartar, this is fun;
Quick! hand to me my well-primed gun,
Those knobbed sticks I hold so dear,
Cut by my hands in the Crimea.

Hold tight! but is the sherry in?
The victory we are sure to win;
As certain as the moon does shine,
We take to-night, those poachers nine.

We on the road to Irnham go—
And to the well-armed poachers show,
That right will sometimes conquer might,
Let go—but give me first a light!

You, Charity, walk many a rood
Along the line of Bulby wood;
You, Helpers, search both far and near,
Your guerdon—cans of home-brewed beer.

Where are my guests? where Christie? Young?
Sneaking the Bulby glades among;
Little they thought when off they went,
The night was nigh three quarters spent.

* Of Irnham Hall, and his Keeper.

They, as they roamed along the lane,
Deeming their foray all in vain,
Espy a form, with staggering gait ;
Who, but a poacher out so late ?

A moment's pause—a moment's thought,
Ere the too willing wight they caught ;
Who are you ? We can waste no words,
Stand and deliver up your birds.

“ Nay, don't be going on that gate,
“ I'm going home a leetle late,
“ I'm but a gardener, something screwed,
“ How can you be so very rude ? ”

“ Come, lend a hand and show the way,
“ I work at Bulby all the day,
“ I lettuces and taters grow,
“ And how to please the Colonel know.”

MORAL.

Those poachers nine ! Ah ! where are they ?
Scared—mizzled—and dissolved away.
No heads are broke—no blood is shed,
And Bulby's inmates are in bed.

And should they ever come again,
Let not the cry to arms be vain ;
Let them not think we play the fool,
With “ mickle cry and little wool.”





THE WAIL OF NEWTON; OR, DEATH OF THE CATS.

1859.

A wail is herd in Newton street—
A wail both loud and long;
Each village dame and damsel sweet,
Take up the plaintive song.

Here one laments her pussy brown,
One here her pussy grey;
Alas! that ever Newton town
Should see so sad a day.

Henceforth emboldened rats and mice,
In soft repose can sleep,
And in the granary so nice,
Fresh hoards for winter heap.

Henceforth from their relentless paws,
No bacon can we keep;
Slain by our Squire's feudal laws,
We for our pussies weep.

We weep for our deserted hearth,
For murders still untold;
For many a cat we held was worth
His weight in solid gold.

Ere Chanticleer proclaims the morn,
And spangles deck the sky,
We know that we are left forlorn,
Our cat is doomed to die.

We hear the cruel keeper's gun ;
With fear we hold our breath :
What may to you, you wretch, be fun,
To us, alas ! is death.

And as we roam along the mead,
Or by the greenwood side,
We see, suspended by the head,
How pussy dear has died.

Here pussies brown, and red, and grey,
A dismal lesson read,
How feudal laws and tyrants may
Make village bosoms bleed.

Take warning ! ye of feline kind,
Who dwell both far and near,
“ Remember ! that ye leave behind
All hope who enter here.”

NOTE.—Ogni lasciano speranza qui intrano.





TO JOHN WARD.

BY S. NICHOL,

MASTER OF THE NEW FOREST HOUNDS.

A birthday ode to Britain's King
The Poet's paid each year to sing ;
To celebrate each patriot's name,
Each hero's warlike deeds proclaim :
Could I but in heroic verse
My country's glories thus rehearse,
My muse addressed should ever be
To thee, fair land of liberty ;
But bad's my metre, worse my rhyme,
To read it were a loss of time ;
But he'll excuse to whom I sing,
For I'm no poet—he no king.
On this the birthday of John Ward,*
Let me in humble verse record
How high he stands in sporting fame ;
How great his skill ! how great his name !
How in the kennel and the field,
To none, since Meynell's death, he'll yield
His knowledge of the noble sport,
How well to chuse the pack, the sort
Of every hound ; how nice he breeds,
And how the pack with judgment feeds.
The large and lengthy dog he seeks,

* J. Ward, a well known M. F. H.

One on the scent who truly speaks,
 And leaves from power far behind,
 The small "Pygmalion" squeaking kind.
 To kill their game, full well he knows,
 As well as pace, they must have nose.
 To take a lesson from his book,
 And at his system fairly look,
 Would Quornden's hero* only deign,
 He would not hunt his fox in vain;
 But no, with him 'tis all the pace,
 His hounds stand staring in his face
 And seem to say, "My noble Master,
 "You cannot have us go much faster,
 "For we, on flying all intent,
 "A mile behind have left the scent."
 You, Pytchley's Lord† with pack unsightly,
 Listen no more to Squire Knightly;‡
 Skim from your lot all scum and froth,
 Too many cooks have spoilt your broth;
 Use your own judgment in the chase,
 And breed from nose as well as pace.
 And you, great Lord of Warwickshire,§
 To this my counsel lend your ear,
 You'll ne'er acquire a sporting name,
 Whilst in a bag you find your game.
 You too, Great Duke,|| dressed all in blue,
 A word in time I'd have with you,
 Your fields are wild, your Huntsman slack,
 In no condition is your pack;
 The proudest peer in all the land,
 The science you don't understand,
 Why then your thoughts on hunting fix,
 You'd better stick to politics.
 To Bicester now my muse takes flight,
 For Mostyn's¶ hounds are my delight,
 And Stephen's** system in the kennel,
 Borrowed from the school of Meynell,
 Brings hounds so nobly to the post,
 That if by chance in chace he's lost,
 Or at a check he does not come,
 No fault's in him, but in his bum;
 But, Mostyn, now the pack's your own,
 Why don't you have them left alone?
 Nor let the parson and Sir Ned,

* T. A. Smith.

† Lord Althorp.

‡ Sir C. Knightly.

§ Lord Middleton.

|| Sixth Duke of Beaufort.

¶ Sir T. Mostyn.

** S. Goodall, who rode twenty stone.

Thus screech, and whoop, and ride ahead ;
Exert yourself, your judgment's sound,
Draft from your pack each silent hound ;
Breed from the hounds that you like best,
And Chanticleer among the rest ;
Then, if Griff Lloyd don't interfere,
You'll perfect be another year.
A Forester to be so bold !
In such contempt these hounds to hold ;
Unusual quite, but condescend
To come down here and learn to mend,
And then with me you must agree,
More perfect hounds can never be ;
Whether in open or in cover,
They hunt so true, they're never over ;
For, as we wish our pack to shine,
We've only those who hold the line ;
Good scent or bad, to them the same,
They never fail to kill their game.
To you, John Ward, our thanks are due,
For all our sport we owe to you ;
Blest with your superior science,
We bid the sporting world defiance.
This day you're in your sixtieth year,
And scarcely forty-five appear ;
And what you say, I hope is truth,
The Ladies think you quite a youth.
May we for many years attend
In this same house, our worthy friend ;
In this same social, friendly way,
Thus celebrate his natal day :
Then fill a bumper to the Squire,
And put my poem in the fire.





A LAY OF 1859.

SCENE—AUNSBY PUBLIC.

THE HUNTSMAN AND THE JUDGE.

Farewell ! yes, the word must be spoken,
To the chase I must bid an adieu ;
Alas ! my poor neck is nigh broken,
My carcass is all black and blue.

They'll say, and they say it with reason,
Nor let it be misunderstood,
That fox showed the run of the season,
So gallant from Dembleby wood.

They'll say that I rode like a Briton,
E'en those who with jealousy burn ;
Ah ! Goodhall, I can scarcely sit on
The part that is called my stern.

How terribly hard is my fate,
(You know that my horse never tires),
What a cracker I got on my pate,
In those horrible Culverthorpe briers.

And what did I get for my pains ?
But a cutting rebuke from my Lord,
That I rode at the fence with slack reins,
And rode to be certainly floored.

No matter, a Fane never yields,
You gallantly hit off your fox,
And over those Sapperton fields,
Full many were in the wrong box.

My ardour exceeded all bounds,
At Haceby I counted but six,
So to keep him alongside the hounds,
I treated my nag to some kicks.

He gallantly answered the call,
As we rounded the end of the wood,
And on the left leaving the Hall
Of Newton, for Walcot he stood.

No ! Walcot, bold Reynard refuses,
And Folkingham gorse he disdains,
The Aswarby coverts he chooses,
Look out for the Aswarby drains !

Tallyho ! he is viewed in the Park,
How I stuck to His Grace on the roan,
Thinks I here's an end of the lark,
'Tis time for my chestnut is blown.

Still Whichcote was sailing along,
And Hardy and Gordon were there,
Alas ! here's the end of my song,
My scene of distress and despair.

How it happened I hardly can tell,
So great was my feeling of pain,
At the time I was going so well,
My brute put his feet in a drain.

You see me divested of coat,
Of spectacles, breeches, and vest,
By this Female, on whom I so dote,
Have I been most completely undrest.

Me—battered and bruised and sore,
No longer so gallant and game ;
For the space of an hour or more,
Has fomented this excellent dame.

Farewell ! Ah ! the word must be spoken,
To the Chase I must bid an adieu,
See here is the terrible token,
A carcass so black and so blue.

NOTE.—In a fine run from Dembleby, when the hounds ran round Newton and killed their fox below Aswarby, Mr. Cecil Fane was in front, near Aswarby Park ; his horse fell in an underdrain, shaking him much. Goodall, on his return after hunting, found him in the Aunsby Public, fomented by the Landlady.





HOSE GRANGE ; OR, THE HUNT IN A GIG.

1860.

Dark, dreary, and dull was the sky,
With rain clouds the heavens were big ;
To Hose rode his Lordship and I,
The Commissioner rode in his gig.

I tell you, you noodles, the way
To covert is best in a gig ;
Never heed what his Lordship will say,
For his judgment I care not a fig.

Wrapt up in my waterproof clothes,
No body can say I'm a prig ;
Long first at the covert of Hose,
I'll appear in my snug little gig.

You fellows, so jaded and sore,
Tired out with your jog and your jig,
Will vote the deep meadows a bore,
Whilst I trundle along in my gig.

Hose covert was reached at one,
The sky was beginning to clear ;
By jove ! the Commissioner's done,
For his fancy he's paid very dear.

A whisper is heard in the gorse,
"Ye rustics! has nobody seen
A very fine thoroughbred horse
Bestrode by a servant in green."

Tallyho! a rare fox is away!
I'm ruined! I'm lost! Dash my wig
What a fool do I seem! Woe the day
That a hunting I came in a gig.

See Welby and Forester both
Ride onward, enjoying the fun,
The wretches I know nothing loth,
To see the Commissioner done.

A kingdom I'd give for a horse!
Oh! where is my cursed green fool?
My language I feel getting coarse,
I'm of folly the dupe and the tool.

See! how they stream over the flat!
What a flat have I been to be sure!
I know not what next to be at,
This is more than a saint can endure.

Away they race over the hill,
Of Cooper I just get a sight;
Must I swallow this terrible pill,
And get such a wiggling to-night?

To Knipton 'tis dreadful to go,
I'm certain to be in disgrace;
And oh! my distraction and woe,
When Forester comes from the chase.

He'll say, and I'm sure he is right—
"My boy, we have had such a run;
"I trust you enjoyed the delight,
"On wheels, of beholding the fun."

“ No more let me hear of your tact,
“ No longer look bumptious and big ;
“ Take warning—remember the fact,
“ What a run you have lost in your gig.”

NOTE.—Mr. Cecil Fane persisted in going in his gig, he lost the run, as his hunter never came.





FAREWELL TO ASCOT, 1860.

THE DEPARTING OF THE DRAGS.

Farewell to thee, Ascot ! thy pleasures are waning,
The last saddling bell is now tolling thy knell ;
Farewell ! we depart without cause for complaining,
For racers and riders have treated us well.
Whilst thus on the people departing I ponder,
Appears at my elbow a fox hunting Sage ;*
Pray do for a moment but cast your eye yonder,
You'll see something worthy a rhyme, I engage.

What ! don't you remember, 'twas in last December,
A smart looking cove† who came down to our Lodge,‡
Who thought he could show each Meltonian member,
That he was awake and well up to a dodge ?
'Tis matter of history—(then 'twas of mystery),
The fabulous price that he gave for a Grey,§
Who over the shires, midst brambles and briers,
Had shown them his tail in a wonderful way.

How among the select, can't you well recollect ?
To Croxton he hasted to hunt with the Duke ;
How he rode all the day in a desperate way,
And after a leader his fences he took.

* The sage, William Gaskill of Foxhunting Fame. † Captain Wm. Cooper. ‡ Plymouth Lodge, the then residence of W. Gaskill. § A grey horse bought of Burbidge for a long figure.

So dapper a figure Frank Grant n'er painted ;
 Such marvellous breeches, expressly from Town ;
 But ah ! it is said that Frank Sutton had fainted,
 When he saw the boot tops were a Rhubarby Brown.*

Thus day after day 'mongst Meltonians he shone ;
 At fences he rode without fearing a purl ;
 He overhauled Gilmour, and perhaps might have gone
 To the lengths, in his vigour, of tackling the Earl ;†
 But legs cannot last when the owner is fast,
 And symptoms the horses evinced of decay,
 So casting a lingering look on the past,
 To Fox and the Bramham he wended his way.

But Billy‡ ne'er lags. Among those gay drags
 Can any be better appointed, you'll own ?
 Than the one with red wheels and the well-bitted nags,
 Tho' the color is most unmistakeably brown.
 Prepared for a start—bolt upright on the box,
 Each muscle quite rigid with tetanic Strain,§
 He casts down his eye from the ears to the hocks,
 Then mutters a whistle, and slackens the rein.

Oh ! tell me what swells on the coach top appear ?
 What light-weights and heavy-weights make up the load ?
 In the front is a portly and good-natured Peer,||
 Well known in the chase, on the turf, and the road ;
 Behind sits the man who, unless he deceive,
 Loved to tail off the field at the stiffest of stiles,
 And was able at Melton, I firmly believe,
 To make the hard riders remember the Miles.¶

There are some who can ride and some who can bet,
 Some able to handle the ribbons, who seem—
 But this we allow, without hindrance or let,
 The company's worthy the master and team.

* The Rhubarby Tops, from his Valet having prepared them from a Rhubarb Mixture. † The Earl of Wilton. ‡ Billy Cooper. § Tetanic Strain. It is worthy of notice that all amateur coachmen adopt the stiffest postures. ¶ Lord Suffolk. || Mr. Miles, the hard heavy weight.

The natty brown leaders—the roan at the wheel—
The scarlet and yellow cockades in the ears—
We fully admire, and friendship we feel
For the stout body Coachman* advancing in years.

Let Beaufort from Badminton bring up a team,
Well harnessed, well handled, and well put together :
Let Vane and his long tails in no hurry seem,
As he buckles himself in his apron of leather :†
Let Bailey and Thompson sit at ease, as at home,
Reverse of the fast ones with tits of high price ;
Yet all must allow, as to London they roam,
Our Billy can cut 'em all down in a trice.

Farewell to thee, Ascot ! thy pleasures are waning,
Thy races are over—thy multitudes flown ;
We regret thee, altho' it has never ceased raining,
Umbrellas have flourished and hurricanes blown :
Farewell to thee, Billy ! sit tight on the seat !
Hold together the leaders, and touch up the roan !
Perhaps you will mutter, “ The next time we meet,
“ May you and your friend be less quizzical grown.”

* The respectable middle aged coachman. † Lord Vane, who adopts the unworkmanlike looking apron with buckles on his box.





THE BULWICK BAZAAR, 1860.

WRITTEN FOR A BAZAAR HELD IN MR. TRYON'S GROUNDS.

How shall the humble muse aspire
To sing of thee, Northampton's shire?
Of this the day—when near and far
All flock to Bulwick's gay Bazaar.

Here, where the forest far extends,
And in alternate woodland bends,
'Tis fitting spot for all to share
The pleasure of the Fancy Fair.

To Hunters, ere the autumn fades,
Well known are Bulwick's sylvan glades,
For there is heard, in blithesome morn,
The welcome sound of Seabright's horn.

And when soft April comes again,
And hounds forsake the open plain,
Pleasant it is with friends to ride,
And cheer the pack on greenwood side.

Long may the face of English Squire,
Flourish in broad Northamptonshire;
A face all classes love to cheer,
Alike to peer and peasant dear.

Here in the forest, who can tell
What merry scenes to-day befel?
How many a youth and damsel gay,
Hailed with delight this festive day.

For pleasure, be it understood,
Is doubly welcome, joined with good;
And happiness, throughout the land,
With charity goes hand in hand.

If we to-day have not the luck
To find Maid Marian, Friar Tuck,
And Robin Hood, with archers bold,
As in the goodly times of old.

If we've no fool with bells and antic,
(For ours are not the days romantic,)
Nor Monk nor Pilgrim (deem it well)
With corded waist and scallop shell,—

Yet boast we many a gallant Knight,
Who's borne the brunt of battles' might;
And many a lovely face, I ween,
Worthy to be our beauty's Queen.

To sing of all this gay cortege
Would overflow the minstrel's page;
Of dames in purple, pink, and green,
Of bonnets bright, and crinoline.

With bearing high, and manners bland,
Comes the fair Earl of Westmoreland;
At every sport he has a shy,
He's game our lucky bag to try.

And if his lovely lady deigns
To purchase for her little Fanes,
We'll hold her motto ne'er excelled,
“ Let Curzon holde what Curzon helde.”

From Burghley comes a goodly train,
Eager to swell the Churches gain ;
To under-rate it would be odd,
At our Bazaar " the Burghley Nod."

There's Freke—whose freaks we know so well,
To Peers, white horses skilled to sell,
Who find alas ! to their despair,
They've bought the horse and not the mare.

See too a placid stout Divine,
He of Botanic lore a mine ;
To-day—altho' he looks so grave—
A specimen he means to have.

From Stibbington has taken wing
Another Rook, intent to bring
His efforts to assist the cause,
And jokes right worthy of applause.

Have we a nip of Curacoa,
To tempt you, Orme, to have a throw ?
We know of old you're always willing,
Upon the Fair to spend a shilling.

And you, brave Squire of Blatherwycke,
Shell out your money fast and thick ;
Come ! bring with you your friends by dozens,
Your London Swells and country cousins.

Let gold Mohurs from India made,
Roll in in heaps from fair Fineshade ;
Believe me, Monckton, take the hint,
Lay out your money without stint.

What happy couples—sword and gown,
Come trooping in from Stamford town ;
Whilst from the hamlets far and wide,
Hither the stalwart yeomen ride.

Who sells the wares ! an auburn belle
In May-fair circles kown so well ;
Her manners, ready wit, and tact,
From hearts of stone would gold extract.

Fair as her form, her dealings fair,
Her stall to rival who shall dare ?
Come here and purchase, old and young !
Not half have I her praises sung.

A contrast to our Lady faire,
Of well-turned shape and flowing hair,
Is one, who, as the boors remark,
Is precious pretty, smart, and dark.

She's clever at the selling game,
In Kent no stranger is her name ;
I hope good friends you all will know it,
For it wont fit the verse of Poet.

What have we here ? a noble mine
Of health upon the Wingfield shrine,
Yes ! Tickencote, you well may boast,
You send in aid a goodly Host.

Here, worthy of a Marshal's baton,
We see the busy Miss Finch Hatton,
With lively banter, joke, and sport,
And queenly grace, she holds her court.

'Tis true, on this we may depend,
The choicest pleasures have an end ;
E'en now the twinkling evening star,
Foretells the close of our Bazaar.

Three cheers let all at parting give,
For those at Bulwick Park who live ;
Long may the line of Tryon's race,
Northampton's forest district grace.

Long may the Bulwick woods resound
With Seabright's horn and Milton hound,
And may we hope again to share
The pleasures of our Fancy Fair.





THE RACE FOR THE COPLOW, 1861.

THE GRASS *v.* THE PLOUGH.

For ages, no matter to question how long,
Well known is the fame of the Coplow in song ;
From the days when its praises were chaunted by Lowth,
'Till to-day, when its fun is in ev'ryone's mouth.

From the days when 'twas pleasant to see how the Squire,
Could horses and hounds from its fastnesses tire,
To the days, when its hill side so merrily rung
With the horn of Sir Richard, and Trueman's true tongue.

Full many a skurry and many a run,
Can prove that its fame has been honestly won ;
And worthy art thou, Billesden Coplow, to claim,
In the annals of Croxton, an evergreen name.

Thy glories were great when upon the green sward,
It puzzled the judge to bestow an award ;
When Lindow, and Williams, and White, and the Squire,
Represented the riders of many a shire.

Aye ! those were the halcyon days, when a host
Of fine slapping hunters were brought to the post ;
When Waterford, Coke, and a legion beside,
One better than common, were eager to ride.

But after, alas ! came a cloud o'er the scene,
The race for the Coplow a shadow has been,
'Till to-day like a phœnix, everyone knows,
From its ashes, with vigor enliven'd, it rose.

From its ashes it rose ! for the question is now,
Which steed is the stoutest ? From grass ? or from plough ?
Can we hope on the winner our glances to fix ;
From Belvoir come three, and from Melton come six.

Four thoro'breds swell the amount of the field—
But they, as is fair, to weight extra must yield ;
We want not the plater—the thoro'bred weed—
We want for a winner, a hunter indeed.

'Tis whispered, since there is but little to do
'Till saddling bell rings, let us pass in review
The high-mettled racers, and cunningly scan
Of Jockeys, who seems the most promising man.

We trust we don't own to of favour a particle,
If we take the first glance at the fam'd Leading Article ;*
The ring to stand in seem most anxious and glad,
For the Earl† is the rider, the owner the Lad.‡

Whoever the mealy bay creature can own ?
So low in the flesh and so high in the bone ;
Perhaps of the lot it may turn out a leaver,
And like many gay ones, be quite a deceiver.§

His jocky, when mounted, looks in the right place,
Nor looks unaccustomed to handle a race ;
Him follows A Sultan,¶ in velvety trim,
Tho' smarter, there's less of real business in him.

Spiteful Dick* in the calendar often we read,
To-day he'll be forward—his rider is Ede ;
But Newstead, the Wonder, and thoro'bred Grey,
Will scarcely their owners the journey repay.

* The Leading Article bought to win the race by Colonel Forester. † The Earl of Wilton.
‡ The Lad, Colonel Henry Forester. § The raw-boned horse of Hon. F. Morgan.
 Mr. Paynter's the Sultan. ¶ Three racehorses who ran in the race.

We next see the Martyr,* and ridden by one
 Who the Liverpool chase upon Anatis won ;
 A Martyr to training he'll run very game,
 But run in the rear, for the Martyr is lame.

The course on the far side, being up to the hocks,
 Will settle the chances of Sidebottom's Fox,†
 And Craven will have but to pay for his whistle,
 And see Mr. Wood in distress on the Thistle.‡

Ah ! who have we here in the amber and blue ?§
 A chip of a jolly old block, it is true ;
 But where are the breeches of azure so neat ?
 Where ? where are the governors figure, and seat ?

'Tis Banks, and none else but a Banks, I'll be bound,
 Determined his Peg Top shall go the course round,
 Nor can we forget how his pa did the trick,
 When he beat all the Quorn,|| and My Lady on Dick.

Though last, not the least of the heroes, I ween,
 By Barker a chestnut is led on the scene,
 High mettled and handsome, with plenty of bone,
 He looks as he walks that the day is his own.

Who rides ? It is Josey ! with satisfied air,
 Says he, as he mounts, to the others, " Beware !
 " You may laugh if you like, but the truth you'll believe,
 " When the winner I land for the Grenadier Reeve."

You may laugh at our Haycock, for what's in a name ?
 Our Hay from the stables of Percival came,
 And many's the day he has dashed thro' the sloughs
 Of Aslackby Wood, and its neighbouring ploughs.

The bell has been rung—they are marshalled to start,
 And pit-a-pat beats every feminine heart ;
 The question to cause the dear fair ones alarm—
 Shall the Quorn or the Belvoir to-day bear the palm ?

* Captain Handley's Martyr, ridden by Mr. Thomas. † and ‡ Mr. Sidebottom's and Mr. Craven's Horses. § Mr. B. Wright, Junr. || Referring to a run with the Quorn and Lady Stamford.

They're off! what a phalanx of well-ridden horse,
Like a rainbow they glisten all over the course ;
The Captain and Wilton are seen in the van,
Ere half of the distance the horses have ran.

Together they honestly run stride for stride,
Of Melton and Belvoir the boast and the pride ;
For nearly a mile is a lengthening tail,
The soft ones are beat and the thoro'breeds fail.

No longer the far-famed Article leads,
He struggles most gamely, but hustling needs ;
Hurrah for the chestnut ! he puts forth his strength,
And is landed a winner by more than a length.

The Coplow is over ! The stoutest has won !
The light-weight is beaten ! The Lad has been done !
Right loud are the cheers that resound, you'll allow,
For the Leicestershire Grass has been beat by the plough.

Three cheers for the Colonel ! who brought to the post,
The heavy-weight chestnut, despised by most ;
To his health a full magnum of claret we'll drain,
And hope he may win with the Haycock again.





WILLEY PARK, 1858.

—“ queque ipse miserrima vidi et quorum pars magna fui.”

WHEN WE WENT OUT A SHOOTING.

With powder, wadding, dog, and gun,
Up, Sportsmen, up ! the day's begun,
I never shall forget the fun
 We had when we went shooting.

Come, Curzon, you and I must budge,
For time is up, and leave the judge
With lingering steps behind to trudge,
 Now we go out a shooting.

Bright was the sky, the wind was calm,
On every side the Coveys swarm ;
Pop ! pop ! the firing made us warm.
 When we were out a shooting.

Trusty, obedient to the call,
Picks up the birds that round him fall ;
Right jolly were we, one and all,
 When we were out a shooting.

Now right, now left, they fell in pairs,
Now single birds, now lots of hares ;
Each shot his best, devoid of cares,
 When we were out a shooting.

But ah ! the dire decrees of fate,
Perhaps the judge had sat up late ?
Or dire dyspepsia on him sate,
 When he went out a shooting.

For be it bird or be it hare,
Or be it rabbit, when or where ?
Alike they vanished in the air,
 When he took aim a shooting.

Was it the day that waxed hot ?
Did Curzon ever cross his shot ?
In happy mood the judge was not,
 That day when out a shooting.

An aspect dismal first he wore ;
Then muttered, " Shooting is a bore,"
At last he d——d, and roundly swore
 He'd go no more a shooting.

Then on the ground his gun he threw,
With hasty steps anon withdrew,
Nor wished his friends a fond adieu,
 When he went off from shooting.

The sight was viewed with silent dread,
What could it mean ? Then Simpkins said,
" The Counsellor has lost his head,
 Since he came out a shooting.

Perchance, as on a former day,
He now again has turned away,
Determined home direct to stray,
 And leave them out a shooting.

For oft the moment to beguile,
And gain from all the ready smile,
'Tis told how many a weary mile
He once returned from shooting.

How tho' intense the summer heat,
The dry and dusty miles tho' eight,
The plucky Judge would not be beat,
But would go home from shooting.

The Severn's welcome bank he gains,
He nears the end of all his pains ;
Alas ! how often pleasures wanes,
E'en going home from shooting.

With weary steps is passed the town,
The toll man meets him with a frown,
Come, come, my man fork out a brown,
As you go home from shooting.

I've none—be hanged—you have no need,
I am a judge—to Willey speed ;
The Tollbar man he took no heed
Of him a going from shooting.

That story, Sir, is only fudge,
You look a pretty sort of Judge,
A dirty brown, how can you grudge,
As you go home from shooting.

Come, tip the blunt, or here you stay,
I'll not be gammoned in this way ;
Well, take my wipe, and that must pay,
I must go home from shooting.

Ah ! let me catch you in my court,
Such savage treatment I'll retort,
Remembering how you stopped me short,
A going home from shooting.

Perhaps we might a moral draw,
No ! morals are but things of straw,
We only sing of what we saw,
 When we were out a shooting.

Let's toast the Judge with three times three,
Long may he live a Judge to be,
And may we all be there to see,
 When next he goes a shooting.

Long may he reign supreme in court,
At Willey long enjoy the sport,
And ne'er again be pulled up short,
 A going home from shooting.





ON WILBRAHAM TOLLEMACHE'S HARRIERS.

BY A CHESHIRE BARD.

Fine was the morn, the day I should have said,
Had I said more, you might have been misled ;
For we, unlike our Sires, who woke the morn
With cheering sounds of hound and bugle horn ;
(Excuse a very antient rhyme and thought,
The poet is but so so, quite untaught.)
Get up at nine, or you may say half-past,
And then devour a somewhat large repast,
Then mount our steeds, and jogging onwards feel
We get a relish for our evening meal ;
So thought our master, for as I'm a sinner,
His mind was less on hunting than his dinner ;
Still time by time as by the pack he prances,
On black and tans he casts admiring glances.
" How even-sized ! That note like music sounds !
" At Tattersalls they'd fetch some hundred pounds,
" A stunning pack I now at least can boast,
" By jove to-day, I feel we'll have a roast."
Thus on he goes wrapt up in visions fair,
Of currant jelly and a hunted hare ;
But in this world I'm sorry to confess,
'Tis not in mortals to command success ;
And Wilbraham, tho' that day he killed his quarry,
'Twas one that made him feel a little sorry.
To tell you what it was indeed I'm loth,
But currant jelly can be eat with both ;
Which fact, no doubt induced the hounds to make,
What critics might entitle a mistake ;

But I must now hold hard, or I'll be bound
You'll say I've killed my game before it's found ;
And on that day, I'm sorry to declare,
We hunted long in vain, 'twas blank despair ;
When Gulliver, that true and faithful hound,
Informed the party that the game was found.
Our Master now intent upon a run,
Cries, " Lively all, we soon shall have some fun ;
" What luck is this, that hound is ever true,
" Get forward Jack, we soon shall have a view."
A view we had, which almost made him weep,
Scouring the vale, he saw the black-faced sheep ;
That sheep which oft before the pack had found,
Clear in his wind, in limb too, very sound ;
But on so good a scenting day as this,
You'll not think Wilbraham's horror came amiss.
Horror I said, the word's not out of place,
For horror is depicted in his face ;
For he of late from Butchers' bills had found
That Mutton cost elevenpence a pound.





1860. A DIALOGUE.

A RUN FROM THORPE ARNOLD.

To his friend Cecil Fane, says my Lord, do you know
That at Burbidge's covert the waters o'erflow ;
Come along ! we can stand on the top of a ridge,
O'erlooking the covert, and close to a bridge.

'Tis certain the fox will swim over the stream,
And we shall be first is as certain, I deem,
O'er the grass at our ease we can gallop along,
Neither hustled, nor prest at the start by a throng.

Go wherever you like, to him Cecil replies,
My way with the hounds, and no other way lies,
For don't you remember what laughter arose,
When I lost a good run the last season at Hose.

For years in my court, I a race have been running,
Gainst all sorts of artifice dodging, and cunning ;
In the chase I have made up my mind to go straight,
Not to skirt, or to crane, or to ride to a gate.

The left is my way here, and yours is the right,
Remember my warning—I pity your plight,
When you see me afar in the very first flight,
Then you will be left, my Lord, I shall be right.

Good luck to a covert that finds us such game,
Four foxes afoot are the least I can name;
Two scarlets are seen on the opposite hill,
Regarding the start with forebodings of ill.

Says Cecil, "I see that some party has taken
"The place with my Lord I have wisely forsaken;
"Do look at the couple, pray who can it be?
"Who follows a leader instead of being free."

By jove 'tis a man who his place never yields
To any in crossing the Leicestershire fields;
But hates in the ploughs of the Belvoir to dodge,
'Tis the Earl! 'tis the owner of Egerton Lodge.

By Stapleford spinnies we hurry along,
The pace is so good, the hounds hardly give tongue;
For Ranksboro' covert our fox seems inclined,
But changes his purpose and turns down the wind.

Over fences and fields pretty quickly we strode,
'Till we crossed near Leesthorpe, the Melton high road,
And passing by Barton and Dalby, we gain
The covert of Gartree before checking rein.

Our fox, gallant fellow, is safe in the gorse,
And bellows to mend is the state of our horse;
For thirty-five minutes he crossed o'er the plain,
May he live in good health till we find him again.

Oh where in the thickening fog can we find
The two gallant sportsmen we left far behind?
Do they patiently sit on the top of the ridge,
Expecting the fox will return by the bridge?

Cries Cecil, enveloped in glory and mud,
"This lesson will do my Lord Forester good,
"For years have we had an encounter of wits,
"Our score is cleared off, for to-day we are quits."



1861. THE CHESHIRE HUNT.

THE HUNTSMAN'S LAMENT.

WARBURTON.

Overridden ! Overridden !
All along of that 'ere check,
When the ditch that gemman slid in,
Don't I wish he'd broke his neck.
I, to hunt my hounds am able,
If they'd only play me fair ;
Mobbed at Smithfield by the rabble,
Who a fox could follow there ?
Let the tinker ride his kettle,
Let the tailor ride his goose,
Not come here to rile and nettle
Huntsmen, since it is no use.
What's the use on't, tho' he scramble
Through a run, that Butcher's tit
Butchered fox hounds, for the shamble
They be neither fat nor fit.
What's the use of jockeys thumping
With their handwhips, bits of blood ?
Nags by instinct, shy of jumping,
For they could not if they would.
Though the chap as cannot guide her,
Mounts the mare that drags his trap,

'Taint the red coat makes the rider,
Breeches, boots, nor yet the cap.
Gemmen ! Gemmen ! shame upon 'em !
Gemmen plague me most of all ;
Worse than Bowden mobs at Dunham,
Worse than Cobblers at Pool Hall,
Spurring at each fence their clippers,
When the hounds are in the rear ;
Reglar gemmen, self and whippers,
Tipping always once a year.
Well ! soft sawder next I'll try on,
Rating only riles a swell ;
Mr. Brancker, Mr. Lyon, Mr. Hornby, hope you're well.
Not the hounds am I afraid on,
And I likes to see you first ;
But when so much steam is laid on,
Beant you feared the copper'll burst.
Rantipole, I seed him sprawling
Underneath a horse's hoof ;
Prudence only heard me calling,
Just in time to keep aloof.
Famous in the field, old Victor
Ne'er again will he show fight :
Venus, since the Gelding kicked her,
Aint it spoilt her beauty, quite :
Weary of the strife, old Wonder,
He to pine for home begins :
Charity her jacket under,
Hides a multitude of sins :
Tuneful now can only whimper,
She who once sweet music spoke :
Vulcan he's a regular limper,
Ever since his leg they broke.
Gemmen who can ride like winking,
Should behave themselves as sich,
'Tickler when the fox is sinking,
And the hounds are at a hitch.
I who beant the Lord and Master,
Though to do my best I tries,
I can only backwards cast, or
Else go home and d—— their eyes.





BANKS' PILGRIMAGE.

A TALE OF ANN. DOM. 1864.

Of Shelton sick, of wife and children tired,
With hopes of fame in distant counties fired ;
Our Banks essays once more abroad to roam,
And leave behind the dull routine of home.
Some years are past since in high Leicestershire,
He one by one cut down each sporting squire ;
And o'er the sloping glades of Cream and Crick,
Showed to all comers how to do the trick.
By many challenged, yet by none o'erthrown,
Still was his boast that he could hold his own ;
And whatso'er his envious nephews say,
Their uncle was the hero of his day.
Ah ! why arises in the Banksian breast
This love of change, this craving of un-rest ?
Why in such piteous tones does he bewail
The lack of sport in his dear native vale ?
Old Limner's tongue has ceased his heart to warm,
And Cooper's holloa fails alike to charm ;
No longer eager for a start to race,
He sinks dejected, to a hindmost place.
Can he have heard what jealous rivals say ?
Ah ! Banks is done—but Banks has had his day.
He cannot hope fresh pleasure to derive,
In seeking with young customers to strive.

'Twere better, when he leaves his own abode,
To be content to toddle down the road ;
And to the listening crowd the story tell,
How once he went, and how he went so well.
He toddle down the road ! his soul's on fire !
The very mention rouses it to ire.
Not he ! he'll seek the counties of the West,
And ride his hardest with Sir Watkin's best ;
A lesson read them o'er the Carden Vale,
And show to Shropshire foxhunters his tail.
Yet should they say, " you've left your home—and why ?
The Duke's abroad, the Belvoir ploughs are dry."
There is no customer, all, all are stale,
I hate the oft told story of the vale ;
I always like, and that without pretence,
To take the lead at every sort of fence.
I hold George Gordon but of small account,
When on my favourite mare, my tip-top mount.
Not worth their salt are Welby's, Reeves, and Fanes ;
They cry " hold hard ! " and clatter down the lanes—
I cut the work out and deserve the meed,
Then they come up and take away my lead.
My friend, " The Doctor," with satiric laugh,
Then treats the field at my expense with chaff.
Next Sampey passes me at headlong pace,
And spatters all the mud into my face.
I'm never free from various mishaps—
E'en Bruxner rides against me at the gaps.
In his own land (so runs the tale of old),
No lasting honor can a prophet hold.
And so to make my story short,
Away goes Banks in search of sport.
At Styche arrives and there bewitches
The ladies with his azure breeches—
The well-turned leg, the well-made boot,
The hat, the tie, all follow suit ;
In fact they all at once declare,
None in their hunt so debonnaire ;
And wonder how, with jealous eye,
The Belvoir hunt can Banks decry.
Welcome to Styche ! the house of Clive ;
No envious feelings shall revive.
Here Banks, our friend, may ride so hard,
No Shropshire fence can him retard :
Right glad that him our grass bewitches,
To stick so close to Walker's bitches.
Scarce can Sir Watkin hold his own,

In spite of gap and dingle known.
"The Colonel" with amaze looks on,
To see such deeds of daring done ;
And listens to the oft told tale
Of feats across the Belvoir vale ;
How with the Quorn the lead he took,
How often jumped the Melton brook ;
And how Sir Richard used to say,
"See how my brother leads the way."
But all are mortal here below ;
Some ride for sport and some for show.
If all could ride throughout a run,
'Twould surely not be half the fun ;
So Banks, who dearly loves a start,
Nor likes too soon from hounds to part,
For seven minutes in the van,
Went better far than any man :
Until a Cheshire sportsman bold,
Unable quite his steed to hold,
Against him made a fearful rush,
And down he went among the crush ;
Unhorsed, he lost his bridle rein,
Nor could his flying steed regain.
The crowd pass by him, one and all ;
His senses scarce can he recall ;
He sees them top the furthest hill,
Then homewards turns against his will ;
And meditates in gloomy plight :—
"That snob, he did it out of spite ;
"He saw how much I rode the best,
"And put my mettle to the test ;
"How could he at that double dare
"To cross me on my little mare ?
"These Cheshire Cocktails cannot know
"How at a fence a man should go ;
"Unused the stiff bulfinch to face,
"Or top the timbers highest place.
"Ah ! small delight I now derive,
"Returning to the house of Clive ;
"His claret will no more avail
"To cheer an after-dinner tale.
"To Shelton I must hie me back,
"And seek delight with Cooper's pack ;
"Be reconciled to Housin's wit,
"And learn contentment bit by bit.
"Never to distant counties roam,
"Or look for sport away from home."



A PROLOGUE SPOKEN AT ASWARBY, 1862.

Poor strolling players, we in hopes unite
That our endeavours may our friends delight ;
Once more we see in Aswarby's gay halls,
Youth, wit and beauty radiant in the stalls.
The lovely dames we ardently admire,
Culled from all parts of wealthy Lincolnshire.
And not alone our worthy country cousins,
But tip-top swells from town arrive by dozens.
All, all, we trust in one good cause combin'd
To be to all our little failings blind.
Welcome to all ! For don't we see below,
Hosts of our friends, who cluster on Cliffe-row.
Fanes join with Fanes, and Reeves with Reeves unite
To add new lustre to our Play to-night ;
And many a name in Lincoln's annals known
Of Chaplins, Turnors, Welbys, broadcast sown.
Nor can we pass in these distinguish'd ranks,
The well-known form of our good Tory " Banks."
Whilst midst the many who the revels grace,
We hail our noble master of the chase ;
To him no small amount of praise we owe,
Who shows us sport, and shows us how to go.
Kindly to us—ye critics, pray, behave,
For we your kind consideration crave.
Not these the days, which saw the stern Mackbeth
Stalk o'er the stage, and ply the work of death.
When Kemble crowds in wrapt attention kept :
And Siddons triumphed whilst her audience wept.
To Blondin now the laurels they award,
And dote upon the feats of Leotard.
Some few alone will Fechter's praises hear,
Or o'er the Colleen Bawn squeeze out a tear.

Hard then our lot—the drama to revive,
And on the stage our transient hour live.
Strive we our best—our scenes are painted cleverly,
Of course—you say—for are they not by Beverley?
No! no! These lovely scenes you're eyes are bent on,
Are by a still more famous master, Fenton.
And this our stage, on which we strut to-night,
Looks like a paradise of pink and white.
A word, kind friends, before our curtain rises,
Disclosing, what we hope to be, surprises.
If in our ranks appear some good old stagers,
Oft seen before, of your esteem engagers.
If you of Selwin's zeal a thought retain,
Welcome a fresh arrival in Du Cane.
If the nice art which never fails to please,
Revives in Errington's refined ease;
If in the studied acting of Miss Yorke
Is seen the gain of energetic work;
If easy wit and laughter ripe and ready,
Belong by right to our ally, O'Grady;
Yet have we debutantes—the Misses Fane
For them I would your predilection gain;
Give them their due for fluency and tact—
The task is hard for novices to act.
Then may we hope our force combined to be
Worthy the well-bred audience we see—
And 'neath your favoring glance our play begin,
Each starter hoping in our race to win.
Again, one word! ere we our play pursue,
To our good host and hostess are most due
The thanks of all, who have this evening shared
The pleasures they so nobly have prepared.
Long may they live such pastimes to repeat,
May we to cheer those pastimes often meet;
And in the drama of our lives declare,
That on one night at least we've banished care.





A LEGEND OF THE QUORN COUNTRIE.

W. H. BROMLEY.

1852.

When careful of his goods or spouse,
A strong man armed doth keep his house ;
It may be termed for him a bore,
To find a stronger at his door,
Who binds thè strong man at his ease,
Pockets his cash and all he sees ;
And tho' he does not take his life,
Is far from civil to his wife.
The ex-strong man looks on the while,
Without the least desire to smile ;
At least, I take it, such would be
The case, did such things chance with me.
There lived, I do not deal in dates,
A Champion of the heavy weights,
Who over Leicestershire had done
Great things in spite of sixteen stone ;
For many years had been admired
For going when the rest were tired ;
Who feared no timber, liked a brook,
Could calmly at a bulfinch look ;
And thought himself in all his glory,
Just at the period of my story ;
But often when we feel most sure,
We're apt to be the least secure ;

And Gilmour, happy and content,
With long-established precedent,
By all men honored and respected,
Was rivalled when he least expected.
'Twas in November's dreary sky,
Strange meteors were seen to fly ;
And rumor spread throughout the land,
That some convulsion was at hand ;
And presently the fact was known,
That one, who weighed near seventeen stone,
Light of hand and firm of seat,
Arrived at Quorn, was hard to beat.
Well ! all men deemed the fact absurd,
And Gilmour laughed at what he heard ;
And not until he saw the man,
The sinking in his boots began.
When first he showed beside the gorse,
Colossal seemed his coal-black horse ;
His frowning brow and deep set eye,
His heart's resolve did not belie ;
Not oft he smiled, but if a trace
Of mirth did flit across his face,
No joy, I ween, it did impart,
But chilled the shuddering gazer's heart ;
And Gilmour, at that harrowing look,
Down to his very small-clothes shook ;
When towards him with the lightning's speed,
The stranger spurred his fiery steed.
" My name, he said, is Peter Miles,
" And there is none like me
" From Land's End to Northumberland,
" And all the North Countrie.
" You Melton men, you Leicester knaves
" Come ride with me, say I,
" Five minutes over Skiffington,
" And then lie down and die.
" I've heard of you Sir Gilemore,
" I know you're all my eye,
" I'll cut you down, and hang you up,
" Aye ! hang you up to dry.
" Yes ! funking wretch ! I know you,
" How you shudder at a rail,
" How you shun the bristling bulfinch,
" And at a Brook turn tail."
But he who was not wont to brook
A hasty word or angry look,
Now, with a meek submissive face,

Yielded the trophies of the chase,
Without a blow resigned his sway,
And Miles, triumphant, leads the way ;
Thenceforth from gates and brooks he shrunk,
Thenceforth by all was called a funk ;
Such is the fate of human glory,
Such the sad sequel to my story.
I cannot tell the year of grace,
In which these things were taking place ;
But this I know, a portly Squire
Now bruises over Leicestershire ;
Whom Sutton loveth to commend,
His guide, philosopher, and friend ;
And none with him dispute the right
To lead the field from morn to night.
But though among the thrusting train,
You seek for Gilmour's face in vain ;
Wait till the second horsemen pass,
You see a form—'tis his, alas !
The heavy-weight who funks the stiles,
And trembles at the name of Miles.

MORAL.

Such is the lot of mortal man,
Where Gilmour ended, miles began ;
And Miles in turn must yield his sway,
For every dog will have his day.





THE COSTON RUN.

JANUARY 17TH, 1863.

But little need was there to-day,
By Coston Thorns awhile to stay,
For scarce the eastern side we gain,
Scarce tighten girth, and bridle rein,
Ere Cooper's halloo sounds, away!
A gallant fox brooks no delay.
Hold hard! a pause—the eager pack,
Their bristles up, no courage lack,
But clear the covert at a bound,
And earnest seek the open ground.
A moment feather here and there,
A moment sniff the tainted air,
Then, dashing to the scent, they show
No common pace they mean to go.
Without a check they hold their own
Along the grass to Garthorpe town,
Then mount the hill, and quickly gain
The spinney crowning Saxby plain.
Away—at undiminished pace,
By Freeby village on they race;
Then seek the heavy fields which lie
Left of the wood of Brentingby,
Where many a rider stayed perforce,
Was glad to breathe his faltering horse.
For thirty minutes now had stood
The fox before he reached the wood.
Will he its friendly shelter try?

Not he, his motto's—do or die.
He leaves it boldly on the right,
And urges on his headlong flight,
Aspires to reach his own abode,
And crosses o'er the Melton road.
For now, on Melton spinney bent,
He shapes his course with best intent,
Descends the hill which thither leads,
And hastens o'er its molehill meads.
For distant now not many a rood,
That spinney can aloft be viewed.
But, ah! the wind is in his teeth,
A shift he tries to save his breath;
He dare not, cannot onwards stay,
But tacks and holds another way.
For Waltham makes an effort bold,
And gains the village's stronghold.
A vain attempt to further fly,
Exhausted nature must deny.
A last retreat—last hope of all—
He seeks beneath a sheltering stall.
Must the brave beast, his labors o'er,
His blood upon the threshold pour?
He died—as heroes oft have done,
Fresh from the laurels they have won.
For few the foxes who could stay
Before the hounds who ran to-day,
Near fifty minutes, and the pace
From end to end, almost a race.
Those hounds, who first and foremost shone,
Old Rallywood would not disown.
For stoutness well might they aspire
To all the merits of their sire.
To hunt, to race, to hold the lead,
None e'er can beat his matchless breed.
But if no fox they hunt—beware!
They love to hunt the timid hare.
Yet only half my story's told,
If I forget the riders bold,
Who, starting from the covert side,
Throughout the chase did foremost ride.
They scarce exceeded half a score;
They might be less they might be more,
For everyone who hunts, we know
Comes out with the intent to go;
But when the fences bristle thick,
Look out for squalls, and loves to pick.

The Melton men, ah ! where were they,
With Tailby on the grass away ?
Not here to criticise the plough,
And struggle through the holding slough ;
And sô but half a score did see
As good a run as well could be.
No matter then to mention name,
Are they not known enough to fame ?
Suffice it—they enjoyed the fun,
Rode straight to hounds and saw the run.
And may they all again essay,
To ride as well another day.





A LAY OF THE CZAREWITCH, 1862.

THE DEFEAT OF UMPIRE.

The proverbs old, "That many a slip
" May happen 'twixt the cup and lip."
And ere the post is fairly won,
The best of favorites is done.
If I can gain your ear to-day,
And you will listen to my lay,
I fain would tell how small the gain
Of trials run so oft in vain ;
For little boots it now to tell,
What in the race to each befell.
How Voltigeur's illustrious son,
The richest Czarewitch has won ;
How Milkstone, and how Balderdash
Proved to their backers, vilest trash ;
How William Day's industrious hive
Failed to " catch any flats alive ;"
Or how, but little cause for brag,
Was left the owner of Agag.
Of all the story this the pith,
" They put the pieces down for Smith ; "
Still have I left a simple tale
With which the reader to regale,
Could I but hope you would excuse
The failings of my halting muse.
Not long ago, the how to tame

The savage horse, made Rarey's fame ;
When by his prowess overthrown,
E'en Cruiser failed to hold his own.
The Zebra ceased his antics wild,
And knelt submissive as a child,
Whilst every brute, his owner's dread,
To Rarey bowed his conquered head ;
But since this master spirit's gone,
Horses again are bumptious grown ;
Delight to show their knavish tricks,
And place their Masters in a fix.
Umpire, it fell upon a day,
O'er all his craven grooms held sway ;
He flew at horses, flew at men,
Nor deigned to face the post again ;
At Goodwood, so the Kidder vowed,
Ran opened-mouthed among the crowd.
His trainer, ere he went to sup,
Swore inwardly, the game was up ;
Distracted he his master sought,
And thus relieved his inmost thought—
" Alas ! that we, who year by year,
" Have kept the Admiral in fear,
" Since that unlucky Derby race,
" When Umpire failed to gain a place ;
" When we'd proclaimed thro' all the towns,
" We'd whip the world on Epsom Downs ;
" And never since Eclipse, had trod
" So great a horse, the English sod.
" (Alas ! altho' we talked so tall,
" We sung at last, exceeding small ;)
" Yet still I cherished a hope
" Into a handicap to grope ;
" And without hindrance or hitch,
" To grasp at the Cesarewitch.
" And now our brute with power to stay,
" Determined seems to have his way ;
" As certain as my name is Pryor,
" My frame is boiling o'er with ire,
" To think with only seven stone twelve,
" This rosy chance we've doomed to shelve ;
" That all our string shall not be able
" To cope with Godding's well-bred stable ;
" To let some trainer send us forth,
" A light-weight winner from the north.
" There Amy, whom we reckon best,
" Along the flat his speed to test.

“ Myrtle and Bedouin, next perchance
“ Shall at the bushes lead the dance ;
“ But let them try their best, we know
“ That Umpire can before them go.
“ I'll all Newmarket's jibes endure,
“ Could you but find a perfect cure.”
To him in accents mild replies,
Ten-Brock tears starting from his eyes,
“ Since first the handicap I scanned,
“ And our proceedings anxious planned,
“ The thought was upmost in my mind,
“ What if our horse will not run kind ;
“ What if he shows, despite of blinkers,
“ Himself the freest of free thinkers.
“ A pretty game would come pass,
“ But I've a remedy, an ass.
“ A vicious donkey I have bought,
“ Him every wicked trick I've taught ;
“ And since none of you in the stable,
“ To conquer Umpire have been able ;
“ Since he has flown at every groom,
“ (And you have given him leg room,
“ Our dodge I beg you will not mention ;)
“ 'Tis my deliberate intention,
“ Before the sun shall rise to-morrow,
“ Umpire to bring to grief and sorrow ;
“ So I have ordered up from grass,
“ This wicked and untamed ass,
“ And that he may not be too tasty,
“ Have smeared him o'er with odour nasty ;
“ If but the donkey gain the day,
“ And over Umpire hold his sway,
“ Thistles no longer shall he eat,
“ Carrots and beans shall be his meat ;
“ The grist into our mill he'll pour,
“ And all our troubles will be o'er.”
And so in truth it came to pass,
Umpire was conquered by the ass ;
In vain he seized upon his flank,
Emitting odours foul and rank ;
Where e'er he turned, he still could see,
The donkey would his master be ;
And oft repeated, frequent feels
The sharp reverberance of his heels,
'Till wearied out, the strife gives o'er,
And seeks the open stable door ;
Yields to the influence of fate,

And shows no further signs of hate ;
And when the day of trial came,
Ran he as any bull dog, game ;
Beat off his horses in a canter,
And was first favorite made instant.
His party said, " Now tranquil grown,
" Our Umpire will come in alone ;
" Worthy at last of all our boast,"
They reckoned, ah ! without their host ;
For at the bushes such the pace,
But few were running in the race ;
Yet Umpire, foremost in the van,
With undiminished vigor ran.
The Kidder sees his neighbour's beat,
And settled firmly in his seat,
Prepared at last to make a rush,
And every opposition crush ;
Adown the hill no speed he lacks,
But at the rising hill he cracks ;
Lays back his ears, pretends to tire,
And all the fat is in the fire ;
His craven heart gives up the race,
And Myrtle beat him for a place.
Myrtle, who when they tried his strength,
He left behind him many a length.
So now my friends, I pray take heed,
I would to you this lesson read—
Don't on an Umpire sport your tin,
Who can, but will not try to win ;
If you must put the pieces down,
Select that Champion as your own ;
Who like the gallant Hartington,
Wont strike his flag until he's won.

NOTE.—The American Horse Umpire, was so vicious in training, that his trainer could do nothing with him until they turned him loose with a vicious ass, which worked a perfect cure ; and he afterwards ran many races kindly, and won.





MELTON IN 1830.

A DAY WITH LORD SOUTHAMPTON'S HOUNDS.

Midst lowering skies, o'ercast and tinged with red,
Sol, slowly rising, quits his ocean bed,
Chases the vapours of the night away,
Illumines Melton, and proclaims the day ;
Far in the East his glorious orb appears,
And smiles at once on Helpers and on Peers.
O'er gorse and wood alike, o'er hill and plain,
On brooks, still bumpers from the recent rain,
His brightest rays he cast ; as if he meant
To gladden nature, but to spoil the scent.
Though bright his rising, soon his face he shrouds
Behind a mantle of o'erspreading clouds ;
And ere John Clod has drove a-field his wain,
His jacket's moistened with a drizzling rain.

Now Melton sportsmen for the chase prepare ;
Some curl their wigs—some merely curl their hair,—
And curse that rashness which has brought them down
So far from Crockford's, and the joys of town.
Tenacious of his toggery, Musgrave fears
To spoil his garments, worn for many years ;
And, though already mounted, back he goes,
And changes old ones for still older clothes :
(What's in a coat ? When hounds run, he is wont
To show its back much oftener than its front.)
Now here a youth who goes too fast to last,
On milk and soda water breaks his fast ;

Here older hands, with stronger stomachs blest,
With tea and brandy lull their nerves to rest.
Now, trampling at the door, the hack appears,
Impatient of delay, he kicks and rears,
Away ! away ! once mounted, on they ride,
And soon are panting at the covert side.

Hark to that cheering note ! they've found him—see
The gorse is waving like a troubled sea ;
He's gone away, hark, halloo ! to the cry !
Like swallows skimming o'er the fields, they fly.
“ Give them a moment's time—hold hard, sir, pray ;
You'll stop his pulling ere we've done to-day.”
Look at the gallant pack, away they sweep !
The pace is killing, and the country deep.
Rollestone is far behind, and on our right
The house at Nosely just appears in sight ;
By Glooston wood, o'er Cranoe field they pass,
Where many a horse declining missed the grass.

On, on they go, and at a trimming pace ;
See, Baird is racing for a foremost place ;
Yet much I do mistrust me, if his steed
Can hold that pace, and always go full speed.
White spurts and cranes, now skirting looks for balks,
And gallops faster than our Rokeby talks.
See Chesterfield advance with steady hand,
“ Swish at a rasper,” and in safety land ;
Who sits his horse so well ? or at a race,
Drives four-in-hand with greater skill or grace ?
And when hounds really run, like him can show
How fifteen stone should o'er the country go.
If not in person monstrous, yet in weight,
Campbell comes crashing through a new-made gate ;
Now, “ by his fathers' Gods ” you hear him swear,
And much you wonder who those fathers were.
Now Plymouth, at a brook, with Gilmore crams,
While Drummond jobs his horse and, jobbing, damns,
With iron hand, and seat devoid of grace,
You see at once the counter is his place ;
Now on this side, and now on that he pitches,
Strikes all his timber, fathoms all his ditches,
Till, by a binder caught, a weight of lead,
He comes at last to anchor on his head.
Quite at his ease, yet stealing o'er the grass,

From out the struggling crowd see Wilton pass.
Here Goodricke, perfect in his hand and seat,
Rides like a sportsman who can do the feat ;
And Stanley, who in courage may not yield
To him of yore, who fought on Flodden Field,
Forgets his weight, and labours all he can
To show "Perfection" both in horse and man.
Carried beyond excitement's wildest bounds,
His horse forgetting, seeing but the hounds,
Kinnaird, that dear enthusiast of the chase,
Heeds not how deep the ground, nor slacks his pace ;
Will nothing turn or stop him ? nothing check
That form of riding, but a broken neck ?

Here Lowther follows slowly on the track,
And pines in secret for his "tailing pack."
(We speak of years gone by)—for now we're told
Their style of hunting is not always cold
And that they draw till one : We therefore pray
"That they, like other dogs, may have their day ;"
Since Lambert's judgment has reformed the pack,
Improved their breeding, and dispensed with Slack,
All head and legs no longer now they look,
(But stoop to pick a leaf from Goosey's book.)
The gallant Colonel, pottering at the gaps,
First damns, then envies "those hard-riding chaps."

Gardiner, who then for raspers ne'er would swerve,
And thought all riding to consist in nerve
And swimming rivers—owned the pace was good,
But still would have it faster if he could.
See Haycock flies along ; and few there be,
Where all ride hard, can harder ride than he.
With spurs and hand-whip Matuzevic plies—
O'er ridge and furrow swiftly Zodiac flies ;
But though his steed be made of gallant stuff,
"Tamnation, Zodiac, you will get enough !"
Lyne Stephens onward holds a steady course,
And Grantham gallops faster than his horse.
Green, leaning slightly forward, passes by,
But qu'ckly turning shows how good his eye.
Pinned in his shoulders, see old Johnny Moore ;
A gate half open, Rokeby slips before,
Forgets his manners in his love of place,
And slams the swinging gate in Johnny's face,

Then, spurring onward with a graceful seat,
Unlike Camilla, gallops through the wheat.

Now some, alas ! before their horses fail ;
Flight after flight succeeds of post and rail.
The Langton Hill appears—the crowd decline,
And keep their riding till they've had their wine.
Now Brudenell leads, and well does Langar show
The rattling pace that strength with blood can go.
Wilton and Gardiner next their station took,
And Derry, following close on Billy Coke.

Sloping to meet them, stood exposed to view,
An awkward piece of timber, stiff and new ;
No other place will do but this alone,
Nor choice is left—go at it, or go home.
Langar leaps short, and see, on high his tail,
Turned in the air, proclaims how strong the rail.
Over they go, together rise again,
For Brudenell tight in hand retains the rein.
Here Leporello fell—a harder fate
Attends *his* falling : where he fell he sate.
Now Billy Coke, who never lost a chance,
Down the hill's side came rattling on Advance,
And though he saw the willows, still he took
His line, and crammed him straight at Langton brook ;
But vain the effort, gazing on the flood,
Narcissus-like, upon the bank he stood,
Then struggling headlong, fell ; and see, he's done !
He washed his master, but he lost the run.
More on the left, see Wilton kiss the plain ;
Then " Time " to Pugilist was called in vain.
Without a pause, by Bowden now they fly,
The pace so good you scarcely hear the cry ;
With speed unchecked, see bravely o'er yon hill,
Brudenell alone maintains his station still.
Here's Dingley gorse ; " By Jove, they run in view ! "
On reynard struggles, on the pack pursue ;
The earths are open, will he reach the cover ?
Who-hoop ! he sinks exhausted ; all is over.

How are the mighty fallen ! lulled to rest
By fifty minutes of Southampton's best ;
Some deep in ditches lie, 'midst brambles toss'd ;

Others, more prudent, are "by Farmers crossed,"
These lost their start, from those, the hounds had turned,
Yet something still from Brudenell all have learned ;
And now, for once, a Melton field must own,
Fairly and cleanly, they were all "cut down."

The backward crowd are still the first to chide,
For all can censure where but few can ride.
Let those blame others who themselves excel,
And pass their judgment, who have ridden well.
Each timid skirter thinks it is his right,
To hurt your feelings and display his spite.
If blest with iron nerves, "you ride for fame,
And seek in hunting nothing but a name ;"
If tender of your person in the chase,
"You love the hounds, but still refuse to race."
"Look at him now !" on all sides it is said,
"I always knew it, damn him, he's afraid !"
These blame the system, master, hounds, and all,
And swear the huntsman does not like a fall ;
Not prone to cavil, or to take offence,
Some in good nature pardon want of sense,
And think a smiling and unmeaning face
Can Ewart stop, or Willis, when they race.
On t'other tack some err, and make their boast,
Hounds run the hardest when they're damned the most.
Who to Southampton could in judgment yield ?
With a light hand he ruled a stubborn field ;
Now firm, now gentle, as occasion proved,
And on all sides alike, both feared and loved.
Come then again ! resume thy proper place !
Manage the kennel, and direct the chase ;
An equal balance keep, the skirters chide,
And check "Spring Captains" when they try to ride.
For want of practise all our talents lost ;
Hounds never run, but still the same they cost.
What shall we do without thee ? for I hear
The country's vacant in another year.
Old times, old sport bring back ! and once again
Melton shall flourish 'neath the golden reign.

[Reprinted from the "New Sporting Magazine," 1837.]



MEYNELL'S HUNT, BILLEDON COPLOW.

A REMARKABLE DAY'S SPORT IN LEICESTERSHIRE, ON MONDAY,

FEBRUARY 24TH, 1800.

"Quæque que ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fin."

With the wind at north east, forbiddingly keen,
The Coplow of Billesdon ne'er witness'd I ween
Two hundred such horses and men, at a burst,
All determined to ride—each resolv'd to be first.
But to get a good start over eager and jealous,
Two thirds, at the least, of these very fine fellows,
So crowded, and hustled, and jostled, and cross'd,
That they rode the wrong way, and at starting were lost.
In spite of th' unpromising state of the weather,
Away broke the fox, and the hounds close together.
A burst up to Tilton so brilliantly ran,
Was scarce ever seen in the mem'ry of man.
What hounds guided scent, or which led the way,
Your bard—to their names quite a stranger—can't say;
Tho' their names had he known, he is free to confess,
His horse could not shew him, at such a death-pace.
Villiers, Cholmondeley, and Forester, made such sharp play,
Not omitting Germain, never seen till to-day:
Had you judg'd of these four by the *trim of their pace*,
At Bib'ry you'd thought they'd been riding a race.

But these hounds with a scent, how they dash and they fling !
 To o'er ride them, is quite *the impossible thing*.
 Disdaining to hang in the wood, thro' he raced,
 And the open for Skeffington gallantly faced,
 Where headed, and foil'd, his first point he forsook,
 And merrily led them a dance o'er the brook.
 Pass'd Galby and Norton, Great Stretton and Small,
 Right onward still sweeping to old Stretton Hall ;
 Where two minutes' check, serv'd to shew, at one ken,
 The extent of the havoc 'mongst horses and men.
 Such sighing, such sobbing, such trotting, such walking—
 Such reeling, such halting, of fences such baulking—
 Such a smoke in the gaps, such comparing of notes—
 Such quizzing each other's daub'd breeches and coats ;
 Here a man walk'd afoot, who his horse had half kill'd,
 There you met with a steed who his rider had spill'd :
 In short, such dilemmas, such scrapes, such distress,
 One fox ne'er occasioned, *the knowing confess*.
 But alas ! the dilemmas had scarcely began,
 On for Wigston and Ayleston he resolute ran,
 Where a few of the stoutest now slacken'd and panted,
 And many were seen irretrievably planted.
 The high road to Leicester the scoundrel then crossed,
 As Tell-Tale* and Beaumont† found to their cost ;
 And Villiers esteem'd it a serious *bore*,
 That no longer could Shuttlecock‡ fly as before.
 Even Joe Miller's§ spirit of fun was so broke,
 That *he* ceased to consider the run as a *joke*.
 Then streaming away, o'er the river he splashed—
 Germain, close at hand, off the bank Melon|| dash'd.
 Why the Dun prov'd so stout, in a scamper so wild.
 Till now he had only been rode by a Child.¶
 After him plung'd Joe Miller with Musters so slim,
 Who twice sunk, and nearly paid dear for his whim,
 Not reflecting that all Water Melons must swim.
 Well sous'd by their dip, on they brush'd o'er the bottom,
 With liquor on board enough to besot 'em :
 But the villain no longer at all at a loss,
 Stretch'd away like a devil for Enderby Gorse.
 There meeting with many a brother and cousin,
 Who knew how to dance a goodhay in the furzen,

* Mr. Forester's horse. + Mr. Maddock's horse. † Lord Villier's horse. § Mr. Muster's horse.
 || Mr. Germain's horse.

¶ Formerly the property of Mr. Child, to whom this hunt is perhaps *originally* indebted for the present spirited style of riding to hounds.

Jack Raven* at length, coming up on a hack,
 Whom a farmer had lent him—whipp'd off the game pack,
 Running sulky, old Loadstone† the stream would not swim,
 No longer sport proving a *magnet* to him.
 Of mistakes, and mishaps, and what each man befell,
 Would the Muse could with justice poetical tell!
 Bob Grosvenor on Plush,‡ tho' determined to ride,
 Lost, at first, a good start, and was soon set aside;
 Tho' he charg'd hill and dale, not to lose this rare chase,
 On Velvet, Plush could not get footing alas!
 To Tilton sail'd bravely Sir Wheeler O'Cuff,
 Where neglecting, thro' hurry, to keep a good luff,
 To leeward he drifts, how provoking a case!
 And was forc'd, tho' reluctant, to give up the chase.
 As making his way to the pack not his *forte*,
 Sir Lawley§ as usual, lost half of the sport.
 But then the professed philosophical creed,
 That "All's for the best," of Master Candide,
 If not comfort Sir R., reconcile may at least,
 For on *this* supposition, *his* sport is the best.
 Orby Hunter, who seem'd to be hunting his fate,
 Got falls to the tune of no fewer than *eight*.
 Basan's King|| upon Glimpse¶ sadly out of condition,
 Pull'd up, to avoid of being tir'd the suspicion.
 He did right; for Og'. very soon found,
 His *worst* had he done, he'd have scarce glimps'd a hound.
 Charles Meynell, who lay very well with the hounds,
 Till of Stretton he nearly arrived at the bounds,
 Now discover'd that Waggoner** rather would creep,
 Than exert his great prowess in taking a leap.
 But when crossing the turnpike, he read "*** Put on here,"
 'Twas enough to make any one bluster and swear.
 The Waggoner feeling familiar the road,
 Was resolved not to quit it, so stock still he stood.
 Yet prithee, dear Charles! why rash vows will you make,
 Thy leave of old Billesdon†† to finally take?
 Since from Segg's Hill‡‡ for instance, or perhaps Melton Spinney,
 If they go a good pace, you are beat for a *guinea*.
 'Tis money, they say makes the mare to go kind:

* The name of the huntsman. † The huntsman's horse. ‡ Mr. Robert Grosvenor's horse.

§ Sir Robert Lawley—not unusually, in the brief dialect of Melton, called Sir Lawley.

|| Mr. Oglander, who according to the same dialect, goes by the more familiar appellation of Og'.

¶ Mr. Oglander's horse. ** Mr. Charles Meynell's horse.

†† He had threatened never again to attempt following the hounds from Billesdon, as no horse could carry his weight up to them in *that* part of the country.

‡‡ A very different part of the hunt.

The proverb has vouch'd for this, time out of mind.
 But tho' of this truth you admit the full force,
 It may not hold so good of every *horse*.
 If it did, Ellis Charles need not hustle and hug,
 By name, not by nature, his favourite Slug.*
 Yet *Slug as he is*, the *whole* of this chase,
 Charles ne'er could have seen had he gone a *snail's pace*.
 Old Gradus† whose fretting and fuming at first,
 Disqualifies strangely for such a tight burst,
 E'er to Tilton arrived ceased to pull and to crave,
 And tho' freshish at Stretton, he stepp'd a *pas grave* ;
 Where, in turning him over a cramp kind of place,
 He overturn'd George, whom he threw on his face ;
 And on foot to walk home it had sure been his fate,
 But that soon he was caught and tied up to a gate.
 Near Wigston occur'd a most singular joke,
 Captain Miller averr'd that his leg he had broke,
 And bemoan'd in most piteous expressions, how hard,
 By so cruel a fracture, to have his sport marr'd.
 In *quizzing* his friends he felt little remorse,
 To *finesse the complete doing up of his horse*.
 Had he told a long story of losing his shoe,
 Or of laming his horse he very well knew,
 That the Leicestershire creed, out this truism worms,
 " *Lost shoes and dead beat are synonymous terms.*"‡
 So a horse must here learn, whatever he does,
 To die *game* as at Tyburn, and " *die in his shoes.*"
 Bethel Cox and Tom Smith, Messieurs Bennet and Hawke,
 Their nags all contriv'd to reduce to a walk.
 Maynard's Lord, who detests competition and strife,
 As well in the chace, as in social life,
 Than whom nobody harder has rode in his time,
 But to *crane*§ now and then, now thinks it no crime—
 That he beat some crack riders, most fairly may crow,
 For he liv'd to the end, tho' he scarcely knows *how*.
 With Snaffle and Martingale kept in the rear,
 His horse's mouth open half up to his ear,
 Mr. Wardell, who threat'ned great things over night,
 Beyond Stretton was left in most terrible plight.

* Mr. Charles Ellis's horse. † Mr. George Ellis's horse.

‡ Indeed so implicit is this article of the Meltonian belief, that many a horse, in addition to the misfortune of breaking his hoof from losing his shoe, has laboured likewise under the aforesaid unavoidable imputation, to his everlasting disgrace.

§ *Crane*.—The term derives its origin from the necessary *extension of neck* of such sportsmen as dare to incur the reproach, by venturing "to look before they leap."

Who was said to have threatened that he would beat the whole field the next day.

Too lean to be pressed, yet egg'd on by compulsion,
 No wonder his nag tumbled into convulsion.
 Ah ! had he but lost a fore shoe, or fell lame,
 'Twould only his *sport* have curtailed, not his *fame*.^{*}
 Lorraine,[†] than whom no one his game plays more safe,
 Who the last than the first prefers seeing by half—
 What with *nicking* and keeping a constant look out,
 Every turn of the scent surely turn'd to account.
 The wonderful pluck of his horse surprised some,
 But he knew they were making *point blank* for his home.
 "Short home" to be brought we all should desire,
 Could we manage the trick like the Enderby Squire.[‡]
 Wild Shelley[§] at starting, all ears and all eyes,
 Who to get a good start all experiments tries,
 Yet contrived it so ill as to throw out poor Gipsey,^{||}
 Whom he rattled along as if he'd been tipsey
 To catch them again, but tho' famous for speed,
 She never could *touch* them, much less *get a lead*.
 So, dishearten'd,[¶] disjointed, and beat, home he swings,
 Not much unlike a fiddler hung upon strings.
 An H. H.^{**} who in Leicestershire never had been,
 So of course such a *tickler*^{††} ne'er could have seen,
 Just to see them throw off, on a *raw*^{‡‡} horse was mounted,
 Who a hound had ne'er seen, nor a fence had confronted.
 But they found in such style,^{§§} and went off at such score,^{|||}
 That he could not resist the attempt to see more.

* For which express purpose, more than sport, some are silly enough to think he hunts. And which, though once he succeeded in, probably never will again, though often threatening it.

† Mr. Lorraine Smith. ‡ Where Mr. Lorraine Smith lives.

§ Sir John Shelley. Wild with joy upon these occasions must be here meant, as no one can be, personally, more *serious and sedate* ;—indeed, if the worthy baronet has a foible, it is gravity.

|| Sir John Shelley's mare.

¶ Nor can that astonish any one when it is considered what an inestimable privilege he has lost.
 ** It is not quite clear whether these initials are meant to apply to a Hampshire Hog or to the Hampshire Hunt. If to the Hog, it does not appear that he saved his bacon.

†† Tickler Meltonia, a run so severe that there is no laughing at it.

‡‡ Raw (*ibidem*). A horse who knew nothing of the business he was going about—or wished to know.

§§ Style means the best possible manner of doing any thing, as, for instance, when a man rides his horse at full speed at double posts and rails, with a *squire trap* on the other side, which is a moderate ditch of about two yards wide, cut on purpose to break gentlemen's necks. He is then reckoned at Melton to have ridden at it in style—especially if he be caught in the said squire trap.

||| Score means that kind of *pace* which perhaps neither you nor your horse ever went before ; and if you have not more luck than falls to the share of every first experiment of the kind, it is ten to one but he falls, before he can what is called *get on his legs*. In which case, you may rest perfectly satisfied that he must roll over you two or three times at least before he can stop himself.

So with scrambling* and dashing,† and one rattling fall,‡
 He saw all the fun, up to Stretton's White Hall.
 There they anchored in plight not a little distressing,
 The horse being *raw* he of course got a dressing.
 That wonderful mare of Vanneek's who till now,
 By no chance ever tired,§ was taken in tow,
 And what's worse she gave Van such a devilish jog
 In the face with her head, plunging out of a bog,
 That with eye black as ink, or as Edward famed prince,
 Half blind has he been, and quite deaf ever since.
 "But let not that mortify thee, Shakaback,"||
 She only was blown,¶ and came back a rare hack.
 There Craven too stopp'd, whose misfortune, not fault,
 His mare unaccountably vex'd with string-halt,**
 And when she had ceased thus *spasmodic* to prance,
 Her mouth 'gan to twitch with St. Vitus's dance.††
 But how shall describ'd be the fate of Rose Price? ‡‡
 Whose favo'rite white gelding conveyed him so nice
 Thro' thick and thro' thin, that he vow'd and protested,§§
 No money should part them as long as life lasted,
 But *the pace*||| that effected which money could not :
 For to part—and in death ! was their no distant lot.
 In a fatal blind ditch Carlo Khan's¶¶ powers fail'd,
 Where nor lancet nor laudanum*** either avail'd.

* Scrambling means when a horse does not leave above *three* of his legs behind him, and saves himself by pitching on his head.

† Dashing means when a man *charges* a fence, which no other word can express so fully, on the other side of which it is impossible to guess *what* mischief awaits him, but where his getting a fall is reduced, as nearly as possible, to a moral certainty.

‡ Rattling fall. Q. E. D.

§ Which if other proof were wanting, ascertains beyond anything else the severity of this chase.

¶ A familiar appellation, borrowed from Blue Beard, and bestowed by his friends at Melton on Mr. Vanneek, than which nothing can more thoroughly prove the estimation in which his society is held there, since none but GOOD FELLOWS are ever esteemed, according to the Meltonian principles, worthy of a nick-name.

¶ Which was his own observation, the merit of which I should scorn to assume ; but for the truth of which, at least the latter assertion, I can vouch, as I perfectly agree with him, that I never saw a more *complete* hack, though he is pleased to call her a hunter.

** and †† Two nervous affections in every sense of the word, very distressing, especially to a by-stander who cannot command his risible muscles on so *melancholy* an occasion.

‡‡ A gentleman of whom it has been *erroneously* said, that he never returned from hunting, but his horse was sure to be either lame or knocked up.

§§ At the cover side his horse had been particularly admired, and a considerable sum of money offered for him.

||| Which is a complete answer to that impertinent question, so vauntingly asked by a favourite poet, when he exclaims—in language indeed somewhat *bold*—"Pray what can do that, which money cannot?"

¶¶ The name of *poor Mr. Price's horse*.

*** Two excellent restoratives where the patient is not *too far* gone—where he is, as in the present case, inimitable soporifics.

More care* of a horse than he took, could take no man—
 He'd more *straw* than would serve any lying-in woman.
 Still he died! yet just *how*, as nobody knows,
 It may truly be said, he died "*under the Rose*."
 At the death of poor Khan, Melton† feels such remorse,
 'That they christen'd *that ditch the Vale of White Horse*!
 Thus ended a chase, which for distance and speed,
 Its fellow we never have heard of, or read.
 Every species of ground, ev'ry horse does not suit,
 What's a good *country*‡ *Hunter*, may here prove a brute,
 And unless for all sorts of strange fences prepar'd
 A man and his horse are sure to be scar'd.
 This variety gives constant *life* to the chase;
 But as Forester§ says—"Sir, *what kills is the pace*."
 In most other countries, they boast of their breed,
 For carrying at times, such a beautiful *head*;||
 But these hounds to carry a head cannot fail,
 And constantly too, for by George there's *no tail*.¶
 Talk of horses, and hounds, and the system of kennel,
 Give me Leicestershire nags, and the hounds of Old Meynell.

* Indeed it is only to be lamented that Mr. P. had not taken more care of him a *little earlier* in the day, which probably would have obviated the necessity for this *accouchment*.

† Which redounds highly to the credit and sympathy of the Melton gentlemen, and completely refutes a very ill-natured but *groundless* suspicion that their sensibility will even suffer them to make a *joke* of any such heavy loss a gentleman may happen to sustain—especially if the gentleman likewise happens to be heavy himself, which of course doubles the *weight* of the misfortune.

‡ As every country gentleman may not comprehend the force of this expression, he ought to know that Meltonians hold every horse that cannot "go along a *slapping pace*," "stay at that pace," "skim ridge and furrow," "catch his horses," "top a flight of rails," "come well into the next field," "charge an ox fence," "go in and out clever," "face a brook," "swish at a rasper," and in short do "all that kind of thing," (phrases so plain and intelligible it is impossible to mistake their meaning). A horse is held in the same contempt in Leicestershire as a coxcomb holds a country bumpkin. In vulgar counties (*i. e.* all others) where those accomplishments are not indispensable, he *may be* a hunter.

§ A gentleman who practically explains all the above accomplishments, to the great edification of young horses, and the no less *astonishment* of weak minds.

|| A favourite maxim of Mr. Forester's, of the truth of which he seldom loses an opportunity of endeavouring to make his friends thoroughly sensible.

¶ and ¶ As "heads and tails" are not here to be understood in their common acceptation, and as all ladies, not sportswomen, may not know they have no reference to the human head or tail, they should know that when you can "cover the hounds with a sheet," they are said to carry a beautiful *head*, when on the contrary they follow the leader in a line like a flight of wild fowl, they are then said *to tail*.



THE EPWELL HUNT.

A SKETCH IN RHYME OF A FAMOUS RUN WITH THE WARWICKSHIRE
HOUNDS, A.D. 1807.

"I cannot but remember such things were."

As Epwell's wide heath t'other morn I passed over,
The hounds of Squire Corbett were drawing the cover ;
Enraptured I heard them, and jogging my horse,
I came up just in time, as they found in the gorse—
A field of crack riders all eager and keen,
And clad in bright scarlet, enliven'd the scene.
But the morning was cold, and the frost over-night
Made the country all round in a terrible plight.

Soon, however, we found, and disdaining to stay
Reynard broke in full view and went boldly away ;
But a sad country took, much against our wills,
And led us a dance over steep and rough hills ;
At length in some gorse he kept dodging about
Till Wanton (good bitch !) forced the vagabond out,
And off he then went in a very prime style,
The hounds close upon him—best part of a mile :
Was next viewed in a bottom, but there headed back,
And whilst mounting a hill fell a prey to the pack ;
This burst—perhaps Melton will smile when it reads—
Was so quick that it took something out of the steeds,

Nay, to tell the whole truth, many found it too fast,
And some very crack riders were looking aghast.

Squire Kynaston,* though upon Whalebone 'The Tough,'
Found he'd lost a fore-shoe—that's to say, had enough,
And Cromie,† who came "*just to see them throw off*,"
At all that he saw predetermined to scoff,
Confessed that *for once* his opinion was wrong—
"Gad!" (he simper'd) "these Warwickshire dogs go along."

Many others contented went quietly home,
Little dreaming (I ween) of the pleasure to come,
And some, while debating to stay or to go,
Were soon out of doubt when they heard Tally Ho!

Tally Ho! with a vengeance, for strange to recount,
Scarce allowing us time our nags to remount,
Up sprang a fresh Fox—from a drain, as they say;
For Winderton making most desperate play;
There headed, and forced his first point to decline,
Back to Epwell he took us as straight as a line,
And there—nothing left for his life but to run—
He resolved to die game and to shew us some fun.
So through Swacliffe plantations he gallantly went,
Crossing Hook-Norton Heath with a rare burning scent,
Where a few of the stoutest put on 'the long face'
And the young ones no longer complained of the pace.
From thence quite determined to give us our fill,
For Swarford he made and went right up the hill—
Crossed the road at a pace which made slow coaches stare,
And was fatal, poor Fretwell,‡ alas! to your mare.
Through the park of old Weston the vagrant next races,
That hallowed abode of 'The Loves and the Graces,'
Where dwells Squire Sheldon—an excellent fellow—
For good§ stories far-famed—and the violincello.
Now in much slower time, tow'rds Heythrop he moves
But vain all his efforts—the scent still improves—
Till at length having gone miles and miles right on end,
At a pace that the oldest man out never kenned,
Having filled a whole country with falls and disasters,
Nearly killed all the nags and well tumbled their masters,—
At Foxberry they caught him, whilst going to ground,
A day's journey distant from where he was found.
By this time, as my readers perhaps will suspect,
The attendants of Reynard became quite select,

* Roger Kynaston of Witham Grove, Essex and Sandford Park, father of Dr. Herbert Kynaston, D.D., Canon, and Head Master of St. Paul's School.

† Sir Lambert Cromie, married in 1816, Miss Hicks Beach.

‡ A farmer of that name who killed a valuable mare by a fall of timber at this spot.

§ Qy. "*Long*," (Printer's Devil.)

And the few that remained never witnessed (I ween)
 In the course of their lives a more comical scene ;
 Such confusion, such rolls, of red coats such a string,
 To describe them were quite the impossible thing.
 Here a dandy laid low, all be plaster'd with mud,
 There a groom sticking fast on a slim bit of blood ;
 Here a farmer gives in—there a nobleman lags,
 Alike anxious to make some excuse for their nags—
 Not a field you pass through but appears some sad face,
 Groaning over a fall or lamenting its case.
 And in truth so much comic adventure and sport
 Never fell to the lot of a bard to report.

Then aid me ye Nine ! to record all the fun,
 Which of course must ensue in this capital run,
 Which had it at Melton, or Belvoir, or Raby occurred,
 A volume I'm sure such a run would afford.

First Morant breaks away, in full chase of the fox,
 Stopped by nothing—stiff fences, wide brooks, or hard knocks—
 Trifles these : and of course, in the Melton-man's creed,
 Over-riding all scent for the sake of a lead.
 Many tumbles and rolls got his hero of course,
 And concluded by dreadfully laming his horse,
 Yet contrived on three legs still to keep up the fun
 And went hobbling along to the end of the run.

Lord Albanley next him, in close imitation,
 Rode his horse y'clept 'Ploughboy' in a very front station,
 And none seemed to envy that clod-hopper's place,
 Which (a Lord on his back) may appear a strange case ;
 But the truth is, the whip and the spurs were applied
 By my Lord so incessantly on the brute's hide,
 He had but a sorry sad time on 't—be that as it may—
 Its due both to Peer and to Ploughboy to say
 That they kept with the hounds thro' the whole of the day.

On his five-years-old nag, though of course in the front ;
 Robert Canning comes next—the crack man of this hunt ;
 Let him ride what he will, whether hunter or hack,
 Sure by some means or other to be with the pack.
 Eagle eye and stout heart and a line all his own,
 Gallop past him who can ? though he weighs sixteen stone.

Riding close in his rear, and on much the same plan,
 Lo ! his brother from Foxcote—that kind-hearted man,
 On his pet steed 'The General' Old Franco* was borne :
 But unlike to him† whom the finger of scorn

* The name by which the much-loved master of Foxcote was invariably greeted.

† General Whitelocke—who had just been tried.

Has recently branded as shy of the front,
 This General bore part of the day's hottest brunt;
 Yet even this veteran, though warm to a fault,
 At length evinced symptoms of wishing a halt.
 Nay, so hard at one time his position was render'd,
 If truth must be told—he had well nigh surrender'd;
 But he did just live through it—sadly wearied and spent,
 And doubtless right glad to get back to his tent.

And here,—(though not out the last part of this day)
 Yet mention we must, worthy little Sir Grey,
 Riding equally hard, in a quieter way,
 Sufficiently forward—yet still within bounds—
 His wish to ride *after*—not *over* the hounds.
 In a style very different came Goulburn your bard,
 Who a long time disdaining the cry of “hold hard!”
 Over fences and ditches kept thoughtlessly fanning,
 Resolved at all hazards to stick to Bob Canning.
 To accomplish which end he kept on at a score
 Which his five-years-old nag thought a terrible bore;
 So at Swarford, unable to climb up that hill
 At a nasty oak stile stood obligingly still;
 There they left him in plight not a little distressing,
 The breed of Arabia* most fervently blessing.

On Michaelmas mounted, a mile in the rear,
 Perspiring and puffing—see Allesley's great peer;
 A sportsman so keen that he rides *miles* to cover,
 To look at a fence which he dares not ride over.
 But why this great distance, my Lord should you roam,
 When as much might you see staying quiet at home,
 For I venture to think from the time they first found
 Neither you nor your horse could catch glimpse of a hound;
 But his Lordship avers that mischance threw him out,
 In the form of a brook and stone wall which is true beyond doubt,
 For Goulburn,† his crony, declares 'tis the case
 And says he pulled up at the very same place.

“Well! I never did see ne'er a run like this here”
 Cries Dick B—z—d, to-day most unusually near:
 To see him so forward surprised a great many
 Who knew not the rigs of this Worcestershire zany;
 But his friends passed it by as a matter of course,
 Well knowing he wished to dispose of his horse.
 Now creeping through gaps, and now trotting down lanes,
 When observed he will jump—if not, slyly cranes;
 Now concealing a stumble, now hiding a trip—

* His horse was got by Lord Aylesford's Arabian.

† The Bard's brother.

Like a horse-dealer's man paid to shew off a rip.
In short, (if to truth one must give the expression)
What we do for pleasure, Dick makes a profession.

Nor let us, my friends, in this place overlook
The fate of poor Whyniate, who fell in the brook,
And, who had it not been for that fatal disaster,
Must have seen all the sport, had they gone even faster.
A lesson to sportsmen! take warning from hence,
How much safer to ride than to crane at a fence;
For the Chesnut, indignant at being led over,
Felled him flat on his face—not exactly in clover,
Nay, to tread on his master the rascal made bold
And gave him a bath disagreeably cold:
And, what's worse, after playing this comical rig,
Of the water he took such a terrible swig
That, though Reginald mounted as soon as released,
He could never get nigh till the fun had all ceased.

And now, little Gillibrand needs must make play,
Though he rode mighty shy at the first of the day—
And averred (as if fibbing I ween were no sinning)
That his horse to go pleasant just then was beginning;
And if stumbling and rolling, wide opening the throat,
And convulsively sobbing, can pleasure denote,
Or if joy be attended with symptoms like these,
Mr. Gillibrand certainly rode at his ease.

Jack Ketch* too, with very uncommon forbearance,
At the end of this run never made his appearance;
And though Holyoake gave him much *legal* assistance,
The hounds very wisely keep Jack at a distance.
It is strange, you will say, that Jack Ketch should be *dropped*,
Who the pipes of so many of course must have stopped;
But alas! its too true—even he wanted breath,
And *for once* in his life was not in at the death.

On a broken-knee'd chesnut, with very good shape,
Though in Mufti arrayed, and without the black cape,
Mr. Pemberton kept well in front all the while,
And was carried throughout in a very good style;
But not so was his groom on a hard pulling bay,
Who for some time kept tearing and running away;
But at Swarford stood still, and was done for the day.

With his hat in the air, looking out for a gate—
Neither looking nor riding by any means straight—
Mr. Stubbs (a crack rider no doubt in his time),

* A celebrated horse so named belonging to Mr. Frank Holyoake—the Father of
Sir Francis Goodrick.

But who hunting on *Sunday** considers no crime,
 What with nicking and skirting got up for his pains
 Making desperate play through some rare muddy lanes.

High waving the brush, and with pleasure half mad,
 Roaring out "yoicks! have at him—we've killed him my lad,"
 In a state of delight far surpassing all bounds,
 Lo! the veteran Squire in the midst of his hounds!
 How he got to the close of this terrible day,
 By field or by road—by highway or byway,
 By magic† it may be—the muse cannot say,
 There he was—and what more could old Meynell?
 And beheld the effects of his care in the kennel;
 A care which taught dogs thus to follow a scent
 Miles and miles—overridden each yard as they went,
 And when once settled on it, I think's pretty clear,
 Go a pace which left many great folks in the rear.
 Then let Leicestershire vaunt of its terrible speed,
 Let them jostle and cross for a start or a lead,
 Upon shewing themselves or their nags off intent
 More than hunting—and ignorant quite about scent,
 All declaiming at once such a shout and a yell,
 Doing only what monkies might do just as well.
 Where sport depends quite on a start from the cover,
 And the very best run in ten minutes is over.

May such hunting as this never fall to my lot,
 Let them race if they like it—I envy them not;
 The blood of old Trojan is all I desire,
 So give me the hounds of the Warwickshire Squire.

* This has reference to an incident which will immortalize the name of Stubbs amongst Warwickshire fox-followers. Mr. Corbett once in every season took his hounds for a short period from the kennel at Stratford to Meriden, to hunt the latter country. During his absence he allowed his friend Stubbs to amuse himself in the old country by turning out bag foxes before a small pack of very nice harriers in which the latter rejoiced. One fine *Sunday* morning (*Fama Volat*—just before going to Church) Squire Stubbs went to give his eyes the treat of looking at a fine fox, caged for the next day's sport—when, by some mishap, the door of the cage became unfastened; and Reynard, watching his opportunity, bolted (nothing loath) for the neighbouring henroosts. But not so was Squire Stubbs to be put off—a few moments sufficed to fling open likewise the doors of the kennel in which the aforesaid beagles yelped, and eke that of the stall wherein old Adams Stubb's pet grey steed was quietly reposing; and in a very brief space the group aforesaid, to wit, Stubs Old Adam, and the harriers were in chase of the fox—crossing Allescot Park just when Squire West was travelling either to his *Church* or his *Stables* (history does not say which), and ran into the churchyard, much to the surprise and edification of the pastor and flock within.

† Nothing more excited the surprise of those who hunted with Mr. Corbett's hounds than how and by what means the Squire contrived to be up at the end of the run. During its progress he was scarcely ever seen—jump of any kind he never was known to attempt. But knowledge of the country and a fox's route across it were in him absolute intuition. He knew every road, lane, gap, creek or corner, not only in the country but also (as it seemed) in Reynard's brain; and by means of horses many and exceedingly swift of foot, and incessantly urged to be more so, by double-thong admonitions over the shoulders some how or other—when Will Barrow (the huntsman) screamed his "who whoop!" the old Squire's voice was always heard in response, "we've killed him my lad."



BANKS WRIGHT'S LEAD FROM THE CURATE GORSE,

JANUARY 22ND. 1869.

How little could we think that we
Should hear a man of sixty-three
Had done a trick we must admire,
And beat the field in Leicestershire.

Yet once again our well-known friend
Has proved, "to Blood there is no end."
'Tis ages since Sir Richard's day,
When brother Banks oft led the way.

Now pass we on from bygone days,
And give the guerdon of our praise
To one, who from the Curate Gorse,
Tailed off a lot of Melton Horse.

Away they streamed ! high looked each leap !
The rains had made the country deep ;
But Banks ne'er heeds the ground a bit,
And takes the lead on Goodson's tit.

Him follows Muster's, who can show
How weight can o'er a country go ;
But ah ! the sad decree of fate !
He falls, and lands upon his pate.

Not minding Muster, or his pip,
Comes cramming on the second whip;
Whilst Clowes is making up lee-way,
And means to hold his place to-day.

We surely saw at covert side,
Full many a swell intent to ride;
The scent is high! the pace is rare!
See, Banks is first! the rest "nowhere."

For fifteen minutes had the pace
Been equal to a two-mile race,
When close at hand appears in view
A bullfinch you can scarce see through.

Now Banks! now Clowes! who has it first?
No time to pause in such a burst,
To take a pull Banks makes his mind,
And squeezing thro', leaves Clowes behind.

Along the grassy Broughton grounds
He sails away long-side the hounds,
O'er Hickling Standard on they fly,
And Rowhoe Wood afar espy.

No longer now the hounds can own
The scent, the fox is sorely blown,
He twists and turns, lets up the field,
And Banks his pride of place must yield.

"Aha!" cries he, "hear what I say—
"I never really till to-day,
"Cut down a field as you must own,
"Who saw me leading all alone."

"I've often in Northampton's shire
"Cut down a field o'er fences higher,
"And well you know, how once from Crick,
"I Lady Stamford beat on Dick."

" Yet here I am at sixty-three,
" As good a man as you can see,
" My azure breeches still can show
" The way you bouquet-swells should go."

" Ah! now the hounds are at a check,—
" I'll pat thee, Goodson, on the neck,
" For tho' a farmer's tit, you'll own
" With hands like mine you are not blown."

" Were but Lord Henry here to view
" The ease with which I brought you thro',
" No longer should I hear his tale,
" I'll send you, Banks, a martingale."

So here at present ends my tale,
The fox he died in yonder vale,
Where Rowhoe Wood a shelter gave,
Tho' useless now, to Reynard save.





THE HUNTING SONG.

'Tis a fine hunting day and as balmy as May,
And the hounds to the village have come,
Every friend will be there, and all trouble and care
Will be left far behind us at home.
See servants and steeds on their way,
And sportsmen their scarlet display ;
Let us join the glad throng that goes laughing along,
For we'll all go out hunting to-day.

CHORUS.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day,
All nature looks balmy and gay ;
Let us join the glad throng that goes laughing along,
And we'll all go out hunting to-day.

Farmer Hodge to his dame says I'm sixty and lame,
Times are hard and my rent I can't pay,
But I don't care a jot if I raise it or not,
For I must go out hunting to-day.
There's a fox in the spinney they say ;
I'll be first in the rush,
And ride hard for the brush ;
And I *will* go out hunting to-day.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day, &c.

See the doctor in boots, with a breakfast that suits,
Of strong home-brewed ale and good beef;
His patients in pain say I've called in vain
To consult you in hope of relief.
To the poor he advice gave away,
To the rich he prescribed and took pay;
But to all of them said, you will shortly be dead
If you don't go out hunting to-day.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day, &c.

As the judge sits in court he gets wind of the sport,
And the lawyers applied to adjourn,
And no witnesses come, there are none left at home,
They have followed the hounds to the gorse.
Says his worship, great fines they shall pay
If they will not our summons obey,
But 'tis very fine sport, so we'll break up the court,
And we'll all go out hunting to-day.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day, &c.

The village bells chime, there's a wedding at nine,
And the parson unites the fond pair;
When he hears the sweet sounds of the horn and the hounds
He knows 'tis his time to be there;
Says he for your welfare I'll pray,
But regret I no longer can stay,
Now you're safely made one, I must quickly be gone,
For I must go out hunting to-day.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day, &c.

None were left in the lurch, for all friends at the church
With the beadle and clerk will be there,
All determined to go, and to shout Tally ho!
With the ringers of bells in the rear.
The bridegroom and bride in array,
Each one to the other did say,
Let us join the glad throng that goes gaily along,
For we'll all go out hunting to-day.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day, &c.

There is only one cure for all maladies sure
That reacheth the heart to its core,
'Tis the sound of the horn on a fine hunting morn,
And where is the heart wishing more ?
It turneth the grave into gay,
Makes sorrow to pleasure give way,
Makes the weak become strong, and the old become young ;
So we'll all go out hunting to-day.

For we'll all go out hunting to-day, &c.



THE HUNTING SONG.

'Tis a fine hunting day, and as balm-y as May, And the hounds to the village have

The first system of the song features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

come, Ev'ry friend will be there, and all trouble and care Will be left far behind us at home.

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

CHORUS.

See servants and steeds on their way, And sportsmen their scarlet display Let us

The third system is the beginning of the chorus, marked with a double bar line and the word 'CHORUS.' in all caps. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

join the glad throng that goes laughing along, For we'll all go out hunting to-day.

The fourth system concludes the song. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

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